

2 news

Ulster braced for weekend of disorder

The population of Northern Ireland in general and Londonderry in particular is bracing itself for a weekend of marches and rallies that will bring a high risk of street disorder. Although the army and police have used concrete bollards and razor-wire to seal off the city walls overlooking the Catholic Bogside, nationalists will proceed with plans for demonstrations tonight and on Saturday afternoon.

Meanwhile, 10,000 or more Protestant Apprentice Boys are due in the city tomorrow for their annual parade to commemorate the 17th-century siege of the city. They will arrive against a background of Unionist anger at the Government's decision not to allow several hundred of their number to march along the city walls.

The western section of the walls was sealed off on Wednesday after a series of meetings involving the Apprentice Boys, Bogside residents and others failed to agree on acceptable arrangements for the parade.

Senior RUC sources yesterday accepted that the situation was highly uncertain, but indicated that there were no intelligence indications that loyalists were planning a re-run of last month's Drumcree stand-off. Police thought, however, that republicans from the Bogside might have been planning to occupy the western wall to stop the loyalist march.

The police sources indicated they believed the Apprentice Boys had been well-led and presented a strong case during the dispute. They claimed that residents' associations, by contrast, were being highly influenced by Sinn Fein and the IRA, which they said was "milking the situation".

Leaders of the Apprentice Boys, together with senior Unionist politicians, yesterday

Marches take place against background of Unionist unrest, writes David McKittrick

met the Northern Ireland Secretary, Sir Patrick Mayhew, to protest against closure of the walls. The organisation's governor, Alastair Simpson, said they had "relayed the anger, sense of betrayal and injustice felt by the Apprentice Boys by the wider loyalist and Unionist community." He said that Sir Patrick had "acknowledged it was an unjust decision, but attempted to justify it on pragmatic grounds".

DUP MP Peter Robinson added: "The whole of the Unionist community is outraged at the decision, which is a capitulation to Sinn Fein threats instead of defending those who are in the right." Yesterday brought appeals for calm from a number of sources, particularly churchmen. Dr James Mchaffey, Church of Ireland Bishop of Londonderry, said the Protestant community felt angry and frustrated. He said: "My view is that it's not as serious as some people would make out, but it is still very serious."

A leading Presbyterian minister said that he believed the Friday night march could help ease tensions. The Rev Robert Davy, the church's moderator in Londonderry and Strabane, said: "Perhaps it is better that people should be able to express their views in a sensible way, rather than feeling they have no other way to go."

The organisers of the parade said it would be peaceful and we have got to take them on their word on this matter."

Siege mentality that will not die

DAVID McKITTRICK
Ireland Correspondent

Folk-historians still relate, with some relish, the horrible conditions experienced by Protestants during the 1688-1689 siege of Londonderry city, the event which loyalists will celebrate this weekend.

Surrounded for months by a Jacobite army, thousands died of fever, dysentery and famine in the beleaguered city. As food supplies dwindled a cat came to be worth four shillings and sixpence: a mouse cost sixpence and a dog's head sold for half-a-crown.

But the Protestant folk-memory is that their ancestors endured the worst that the Catholic besiegers could inflict, and emerged triumphant.

This weekend's march is not only a celebration of that victory, but also a declaration of the deep-seated Unionist belief that, 300 years on, they remain under political siege.

The Apprentice Boys, who organise the march, take their name from the 13 apprentices who closed the city gates against the forces of James II, thus precipitating the siege. The grouping is smaller than the Orange

Order and technically independent from it, but in practice the memberships of the two overlap. Their primary purposes - organising Protestant parades - are identical.

The August marches which commemorate the lifting of the siege are largely controlled by Apprentice Boys clubs. The most important of these are in the city itself, but branches exist over Northern Ireland and, in a small way, in the Irish Republic, England, Scotland and Canada. The vast majority of the 12,000 members, led by a local newsagent and a community worker, are working-class Protestants who see themselves as making an important political statement.

Between the 1970s and 1970s Londonderry took on another political significance. Nationalists in the city complained that district boundaries were manipulated to ensure that the council remained in Unionist hands.

The violence that ensued left scars on the city, but the 1990s saw a remarkable renaissance. But last month's return of large-scale riots have tarnished its new image, which will suffer even more if the weekend brings fresh violence.

Child whose smile belies the horrific violence she endured



First smile: Josephine Russell, 9, who survived a brutal attack on 9 July, smiles from her London hospital room in the first picture since the incident. Her mother, Lin, and sister, Megan, six, died in the attack. Photograph: Kent Police

The Staggers gets a grip and cocks a snook at rival

Michael Streeter finds the New Statesman revived

The row over Clare Short's attack on the "dark forces" of Labour has overshadowed a quiet but significant revolution at one of Britain's best-loved institutions - the New Statesman. For the "Staggers", as the magazine is affectionately known, that controversial Short interview is a sign that, once again, it is a political force to be reckoned with.

Other high-profile stories in the magazine recently have included the attack by Joy Johnson, Labour's former campaign and media chief, on Tony Blair's "elaborate and obscure" rhetoric; and the interview with Peter Thomson, 60, the Australian vicar who inspired the Blairite view of politics at Oxford University.

Already the effects have been noticeable. The New Statesman now has a circulation of 22,000, a 4,000 increase in just a couple of months and a figure that may soon begin to worry its

right-wing rival, *The Spectator*, which has also built sales on high-profile scoops.

The men behind the revival of the magazine - once essential reading for the political élite, latterly seen as rather dreary and sectarian-ridden rag - are new editor Ian Hargreaves (ex-editor of *The Independent*) and new owner, Geoffrey Robinson, the multi-millionaire Labour MP.

Ironically, in view of the short row, this is the same Mr Robinson whose Tuscany villa is at present providing a summer holiday venue for Mr and Mrs Blair. Yesterday, it seemed Mr Hargreaves was also away, but his deputy, Jane Taylor, was pleased with the latest scoop. "We're delighted to be at the centre of attention and

creating waves and getting people reading and thinking about the issues involved."

Scops, in fact, are not necessarily the first concern of the "Staggers": that more good analysis and good writing. And the Short interview, one of a number with senior political figures, had, in effect, fallen into their laps. The interview was originally going to take place on the day after the Shadow Cabinet election results and understandably she re-arranged it," said Ms Taylor. "Once she had done it, we realised that the interview would make news."

However, many see the run of headline-grabbing stories, coupled with a re-design two months ago, as a clear and aggressive sign of wanting to make the *New Statesman* a magazine

able to compete with success of *The Spectator* - which has broken a number of big stories, including the anti-German remarks by Nicholas Ridley which led to his resignation from the Cabinet, Lord Denning's belief in the hanging of Irish terrorists, the exposure of journalists Richard Gott's apparent KGB links, and the royal title-tattle revealed by A N Wilson after a private dinner party with the Queen Mother.

Such revelations have been few under the new editor, Frank Johnson, but he is pleased about the resurgence of his rival. "I think it is good that it is doing well. I welcome it, there is room for us all. I think people will always buy good magazines and good newspapers," Mr Johnson has reason to be magnanimous. *The Spectator* is about to announce circulation figures of more than 55,000 - the best ever. The "Staggers" still has some way to go.

Fears over safer blood bag costs

LOUISE JURY

A new bar-code system to prevent potentially fatal errors in identifying blood bags, launched this week, could cost hospitals millions of pounds to implement.

The system will be controlled by a new national computer network which the National Blood Service plans to introduce. But many hospitals will need new equipment costing up to £20m to read the new labels.

The blood centre which cov-

ers London and the South-east last weekend became the first to use the new computer, called Pulse, and the bar codes. But the question of how hospitals will fund the switch is unresolved, prompting fears that delay in a nationwide launch will hinder efforts to improve safety.

Philip Hunt, director of the National Association of Health Authorities and Trusts, said: "Any improvement in the blood service has got to be welcomed. But it indicates yet another cost pressure on NHS hospitals."

The new standard was developed over five years by the International Society for Blood Transfusion (ISBT). But Peter Gibson, who has developed its use for the South Thames blood centre, said the decision to switch could not be made by the National Blood Service unilaterally: "It does mean that hospitals need to change their equipment scanners ... As the NHS is funded by the public, it has to be approved by the Department of Health. That decision is some way ahead."

SIGNIFICANT SHORTS

The Royal Mail claimed more staff refused to strike this week than was previously thought and yesterday renewed calls for a ballot on its proposed pay deal. A Post Office spokesman said nearly 18,000 staff did not join Tuesday's industrial dispute compared with an earlier estimate of 14,000.

The Royal Mail believes that the Communication Workers' Union should accept its 138,000 members in the post service whether they accept an offer which was negotiated at the conciliation service, Acas, but later rejected by the CWU executive. "It is militants on the union's executive who, far from being democratic as they claim, are opposed to letting their members judge for themselves the deal on offer," the spokesman said. Management is sending all workers a copy of the proposed deal.

But Alan Johnson, the CWU's joint general secretary, said: "It's a great shame that Royal Mail are putting so much effort into producing meaningless statistics instead of sitting down with the union and trying to reach a negotiated settlement." Louise Jury

Claims that evidence of life on Mars has been found by NASA scientists were doubted yesterday by Belgian Nobel Prize-winning biologist Christian de Duve, an expert on life in the Universe, who said he has "serious reservations" about them. "The evidence as presented by the scientists at a news conference is far from conclusive," he said. "The chemical evidence mentioned ... has been found on other meteorites and never been used to claim that it is evidence of life. Just because organic substances were found on a meteorite that is supposed to have come from Mars does not mean they were formed on Mars by living organisms," he said.

"It is interesting. It is important. It is intriguing. But it is far from conclusive," Mr de Duve said. "The scientists were very cautious in saying that there could be other interpretations. But they did participate in the show which was obviously stage-managed by NASA ... Would this have happened if this was not an election year in the US?" Charles Arthur

Eurofighter 2000 will cost Britain an extra £1.25bn and will come into service three years late, a public-spending watchdog warns today. The National Audit Office said Britain's £15.4bn share of the four-nation project had risen by 43.7 per cent largely because of new weapons to be fitted to the fighter. But the NAO report on major weapons projects also reveals that the Ministry of Defence may get a £3.5bn windfall from savings on Trident, Britain's nuclear missile system. The report will fuel speculation that the Government has secretly cut back on the killing power of Trident, which was designed to destroy targets in Russia and the Ukraine during the Cold War. Colin Brown

Unions accused London Underground yesterday of risking passenger safety with a plan to use managers to drive trains on the Central and Waterloo & City lines to the City of London if next Tuesday's industrial action goes ahead. A memo seen by the rail unions outlines duties and states: "At this time there seems no negotiated end to the strikes so we are now charged with the job of doing the best we can with the resources available."

The proposals were immediately criticised by the RMT rail union and the train drivers' union Aslef as escalating the dispute. Lew Adams (right), Aslef's general secretary, said that efforts to resolve the dispute would be more profitable "than engaging in stunts which put lives at risk". An LU spokesman denied any danger and said only fully qualified managers would take part. Louise Jury

Courts should stop sending so many women to prison for minor offences, penal reformers said yesterday. There were 2,313 women in prison in England and Wales at the end of July - a 68 per cent increase in the last four years - a report by the Prison Reform Trust says. But only 19.5 per cent were in custody for offences or allegations of violence. The director of the PRT, Stephen Shaw, said: "Every week around five or six women come into Holloway, Britain's largest women's prison in north London, for non-payment of their TV licence. One in twenty is a fine defaulter. The number of women prisoners who pose a grave danger to the public can probably be counted on the fingers of one hand."

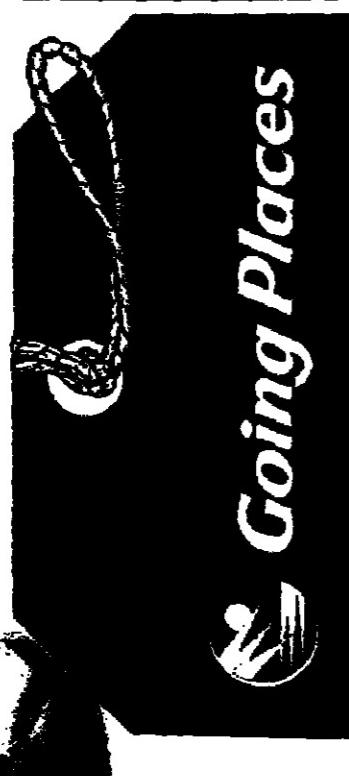
Tower Hamlets Council is hoping for £2m compensation following the IRA bombing last February in Docklands, east London. Few of the families living near the South Quay blast last February had insurance policies; some families have been offered loans from the Government's social fund but many have been unable to take them up because they cannot afford repayments. The council has applied to Sir Patrick Mayhew, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, for a grant under the Criminal Damage (Compensation) (Northern Ireland) Order set up in 1977 to help those who had property damaged in Northern Ireland as a result of terrorist acts. There appears to be nothing in the order preventing compensation for similar acts in mainland Britain. Charlie Ball

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In the Sixties he was the living image of fashion. Last night a man was charged with killing him. Steve Boggan wonders ...

Whatever happened to Ossie Clark?

When the film-maker Derek Jarman first met Raymond "Ossie" Clark at the Slade School of Art in London in 1963, he was moved to write: "Decadence, I learnt, was the first sign of intelligence."

Within a few short years of that meeting, Clark's own brand of decadence had helped mould an entire generation.

His clothes were worn by Mick Jagger, Twiggy, Marc Bolan and Jimi Hendrix; his name was synonymous with the Swinging Sixties and his portrait – with his wife, Celia Birtwell, and his cat, Percy – painted by David Hockney, was hanging in the Tate Gallery.

One can only wonder, then, what the late Jarman would have made of the fashion designer's spectacular descent into hardship and obscurity three decades later of his erratic life in a west London council flat and of his pleas for mercy after being convicted of assaulting a police officer.

Yesterday, as the world of fashion and its followers mourned his passing, remembering the golden years at Clark's boutique, Quorum, on the King's Road in Chelsea, the questions seemed difficult to answer.

In the intervening years, Clark, 54, had become bankrupt, had split from Ms Birtwell, his emotional and business partner until 1974, and had begun a gay relationship.

Kenneth Sheldon, 35, a neighbour in Penzance Street, Notting Hill, said Clark would become deflated when his career was discussed.

"I never spoke to him about his famous past," he said. "Whenever it was mentioned, he would become all reflective."

"His flat was organised chaos and artistically neglected. He liked smoking brightly coloured cocktail cigarettes. He would smoke them when he could afford them, and when he couldn't afford them he would just smoke any old cigarette."

Other neighbours described Clark as dressing like an ageing hippie and said their children would tease him about being gay, provoking him into chasing them in a good-natured manner. Like most of Clark's clients, Mick Jagger yesterday found his death hard to take. He recalled a "flowery zip-up jump suit" de-



Faded star: Clark at the height of his fame in the Sixties (above) and at a friend's funeral in 1990



Art of fame: David Hockney's painting of Ossie Clark, his ex-wife, Celia, and their cat, Percy. The work is on display in London's Tate Gallery

ing at Southwark Crown Court on charges of assaulting a policeman after crashing into an unmarked police car while apparently drunk.

He was convicted, but escaped prison "by the skin of my teeth", as he put it, after desperate pleas in mitigation by his counsel, Oscar del Fabro. "He was a famous designer in the Sixties," recalled Mr del Fabro. "He was the progenitor and founder of an industry that is worth many millions of pounds. His contemporaries have gone on to greater things, but he has fallen on hard times. You can see the tragedy of a reputation and empire which has fallen by the way."

So, what did happen to Ossie Clark? The answer may be found in a "correspondents' questions" page of the *Daily Mail* in April 1994 when, above a question on the origins of the expression "choc-a-block", a reader asked, "Whatever happened to Ossie Clark?"

Replies personally, Clark wrote: "After the excitement of the Sixties and Seventies, travelling the world, having my picture in the Tate Gallery, etc., things calmed down. By 1983 I was in financial difficulties and had divorced."

"Around this period I lost my love of the fashion world and restricted myself to designing three or four ball gowns or wedding dresses a year for friends. I also took up new interests – writing, drawing, music, walking and spending time with friends. My previous somewhat unreal lifestyle came to an end as I sought more genuine values."

"I had the same ups and downs most people have, but I enjoyed the next 10 years and felt privileged at being my own master. I feel this is the most important thing for a creative mind, even if it causes financial hardship."

"I've decided I'm ready to return to designing. I've had discussions about setting up my own studio, and I'm waiting for offers from potential patrons. Until then, I am enjoying producing exclusive one-offs for special customers."

And, according to neighbours, Bianca Jagger had recently called round at the flat for a fitting.

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signed by Clark for the Rolling Stones' 1972 *Exile on Mainstreet* tour. "Ossie was a great friend, and a wonderfully talented clothes designer," he said.

Ms Birtwell, mother of Clark's sons, Albert, 26, and George, 24, spoke of his "unique talent" and the good years they spent together.

"The years 1966 to 1974 were great years," she said. "He had the marvellous ability to produce these marvellous chiffon silks and snakeskin clothes, which everybody of my generation loved."

"He was a real star, but unfortunately it didn't last. I think he got broken by it all."

In February of this year Clark reached rock bottom, appear-



Art of fame: David Hockney's painting of Ossie Clark, his ex-wife, Celia, and their cat, Percy. The work is on display in London's Tate Gallery

Designer who made London swing

TAMSIN BLANCHARD

When Ossie Clark graduated from the RCA in the mid-1960s, his work had an instant impact. His first collection, designed for the King's Road boutique, Quorum, sold to New York store, Henri Bendel, much as John Galliano's graduation collection sold to Browns of South Molton Street.

Mr Clark was the only student in his year to graduate with a first-class degree, and from the late 1960s to early 1970s, he was the driving force behind the

fashion explosion of that period. His label became as sought-after as Mary Quant. Mick Jagger's smock and trousers worn on stage at the famous Hyde Park concert in 1969 were by Ossie Clark.

Mr Clark's partnership with his wife, the textile designer Celia Birtwell, produced some of the most lasting images of the London fashion scene. His clothes were daring and controversial, always pushing forward the boundaries of fashion. A seemingly demure crepe dress would have semi-sheer chiffon panels

over the breasts. His zip-up biker jacket was one of the first to be made of snakeskin. And details such as stitching on shoulders were as much of a signature as Westwood's orb is today.

Mr Clark was a versatile designer, remembered as much for his romantic, bias-cut, floaty tunics and trousers as for his modern tailoring and ingenious use of Ms Birtwell's prints, mixed and mismatched with the eye of an artist.

To fashionable women of the period, Mr Clark's clothes still mean a lot. Affordable by to-

day's designer standards, they were worn and loved by thousands of women from London to his place of birth, Liverpool, where he opened a boutique called Cream in the early 1970s.

Ironically, while his later career suffered for his identification with a single period in fashion history, Mr Clark's time has come again, with designers like Gucci's Tom Ford looking to 1970s labels in search of the glamour he generated.

At this year's bi-centenary exhibition of the RCA, Susannah Handley, a tutor at the college,

worked closely with Mr Clark. She said: "He made the Sixties in fashion terms, as much as the Beatles and the Rolling Stones did in music."

Zandra Rhodes said yesterday: "Ossie Clark represents swinging London at its zenith. The things he did together with Celia Birtwell – were the flowering of British fashion. One collection with prints inspired by the Ballets Russes would have made him as big as Galliano is today if he had shown in Paris. Only the history books will give him the credit he is due."

Students warned re-takes could cost them £300

FRAN ABRAMS
Education Correspondent

Students planning to re-take their A-levels to obtain better grades may face higher university fees in future, the head of the admissions service warned last night.

Tony Higgins, chief executive of the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS), said students unsure whether to take a year off or repeat exams should think twice. Places would be available for most people if they were prepared to be flexible.

He warned that the £300 levy on all new students threatened by vice chancellors in response to budget cuts could prompt legal action for breach of contract from students. Although top-up fees look unlikely to happen in most universities, a number of elite institutions may start charging fees next year.

Among those which have already discussed plans are Birmingham University and the London School of Economics. Mr Higgins said that stu-



dents who applied early and accepted an offer during the autumn might be protected from top-up fees by the law. Universities might find themselves in trouble if they imposed a charge after making agreements with candidates, he said.

"If an applicant has accepted an offer, even conditionally, then a contract exists. It may be a highly difficult legal question," he said.

After A-Level results are

published next Thursday, the clearing process, through which surplus places are allocated, will begin.

This year, 420,000 students are competing for 290,000 places, about 40,000 of which are likely to be filled through clearing. The numbers are almost identical to last year, Mr Higgins said yesterday.

At a conference to launch clearing, which begins on 19 August, he also highlighted new statistics which showed that more and more students were choosing to study closer to home. The proportion going to university in their home region rose from 42 per cent in 1994 to 46 per cent in 1995.

The change was partly due to financial pressures and partly because a greater proportion were mature students, who were likely to be married with children, Mr Higgins said.

Students from poorer backgrounds were more likely to study at new universities near their homes and to live with their parents, while those from the middle classes still went away to university.

"Perhaps it is equally character-building, spending three years living with your parents at the age of 19 as going away, though I suppose it depends on your relationship with your parents," he said.

The official UCAS listing of places available through clearing will be published exclusively in the *Independent*, starting on Monday, 19 August.

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THE INDEPENDENT • FRIDAY 9 AUGUST 1996

news

Rothschild took his life after death of mother

HELEN NOWICKA

Amschel Rothschild, millionaire heir to the banking dynasty, hanged himself in a Paris hotel room while suffering from depression brought on by his mother's death.

An inquest heard yesterday how the banker was a reticent man who did not show his feelings but had been distressed since his mother, Teresa, Lady Rothschild, had died six weeks earlier.

In a written statement read to the court his widow, Anita, said: "His family had noticed that he had depressive tendencies. We do not know the reason for this but certain family antecedents predisposed him to this act. The loss of his mother had affected him."

Mrs Rothschild, part of the Guinness family, added her husband of 15 years had not been receiving treatment or taking medication for depression. The family was represented by lawyers in court.

Mr Rothschild, 41, whose personal fortune has been estimated at between £50m and £100m, was the chairman of Rothschild Asset Management, the fund management arm of the family banking firm. He was in Paris last month with Peter Troughton, the company's deputy chairman, for a business meeting after which he returned to his room at the Hotel Bristol.

The pair had arranged to meet for a drink before dinner

but the usually punctual Mr Rothschild did not appear at the arranged time. After 20 minutes Mr Troughton tried to call him but the line was busy. He was on the point of going to Mr Rothschild's room when the hotel manager informed him Mr Rothschild had died.

Mr Troughton told the hearing at Westminster Coroner's Court in London that the meeting had been successful and Mr Rothschild had not seemed troubled afterwards, but added that he was a "reticent" man.

Naima Debbouza, a hotel chambermaid, said Mr Rothschild had seemed angry when she had gone to his room that evening to deliver his laundry.

In a written statement she said: "He took the box containing the washing out of my hands very aggressively and banged his door like someone annoyed, even disturbed."

Less than two hours later she returned to room 402 to make his bed. When she knocked and received no answer she let herself in to find his fully-clothed body in the bathroom, his dressing gown belt fastened around his neck and tied to the towel rail.

Pathologist Dr Iain West said a post-mortem examination had revealed marks around Mr Rothschild's neck consistent with hanging.

Recording a verdict of suicide, the coroner Dr Paul Knapman emphasised there were no sinister circumstances surrounding Mr Rothschild's death.

Photograph: Tom Pilston

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news

Dear John, The weather's fine and the Chianti is good.
Why are people worrying about where I go on holiday?

Some wine, a copy of the New Statesman, and Chiantishire is paradise, writes **Rebecca Fowler**

As Tony Blair rose for breakfast in the Chiantishire sunshine yesterday morning and stepped into something summery, having left his cardigan at home in Islington, at least for a moment it must have seemed the perfect setting for a political holiday.

setting for a political holiday. Here they were with the kids in the villa of Geoffrey Robinson, the millionaire owner of the socialist *New Statesman*, and a bunch of devoted New Labour followers. There was undoubtedly some lively banter over Clare Short's attack on his leadership and the "dark forces" surrounding him, but not too much. This was a holiday.

So what if there was a hint of the discreet charm of the bourgeoisie to the place. Since the Mr Blair family holiday in the Butlin's resort at Bognor Regis last year, he has left behind any pretensions of courting the working classes through his choice of resort.

choice of resort. But the Blairs' critics thought otherwise. Rather than holidaying with the masses, the family has been accused of living it up, drinking fine wines, and bathing in a private swimming pool as removed as a royal holiday from socialism.

al holiday from socialism.

When the Italian press arrived on the doorstep, Mr Blair dismissed attacks on his "middle-class" choice of holiday destination, although he resisted suggesting of his detractors: "Let them eat pasta". Instead Mr Blair reportedly said: "If we don't free ourselves of all this ideological weight, we won't be

He also ventured to his uninvited guests: "You're not British journalists by any chance, are you? Tuscany? I love it. There's so much history, culture, the weather's great and

According to Sir Bernard Ingham, there is no perfect holiday destination for political leaders and they should not be

Harold and Mary enjoy beach life on the pretty Isle of Wight

Tony enjoys a stroll in Chiantishire and a country sweater with Cherie

John and Diane walking the dog in Cornwall

restricted in their choice – with the obvious exceptions of dictatorships. But he was still con-

There was no shortage of British comrades for the Blairs.

in hand, for the Scilly Isles each year. The Thatchers also opted for the less swank

white villa of the carpet millionaire, Lord Harris of Peckham, on the Riviera at Mougin

Horam opted for a cycling holiday; and Peter Lilley is visiting both France and Italy.

It must be a comfort for Blairs to know John Prescott holding the fort, although

the summer advertising campaign last week warning against "Tories", which will greet holiday

makers at airports at home and abroad, but not in Chiantishire.

The Blairs may be relieved to know a Tory plan for a counter-campaign was dropped. "People on holiday do not want party politics thrust down their throats," a source reportedly said. As Mr Blair closed his copy of the *New Statesman* he probably could not agree more.

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Puritanism in the movies: Presidential election pressures prevent distribution of British director's version of film in US



Too sexy for the States: Dominique Swain (left) plays the eponymous heroine in Adrian Lyne's (centre) *Lolita*; James Mason as Humbert opposite Sue Lyon in Stanley Kubrick's 1962 film version of the 1955 novel

Correctness fears keep *Lolita* under wraps

MARIANNE MACDONALD
Arts Correspondent

A new film of Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita* by the British director Adrian Lyne may have fallen victim to the pressure for political correctness in Hollywood during election year.

He has been unable to find a United States distributor six months after completing filming, with Jeremy Irons playing the lead opposite an unknown 14-year-old schoolgirl from Malibu, Dominique Swain.

Mr Lyne, who directed the sexually explosive movies *9½ Weeks*, *Fatal Attraction* and *Indecent Proposal*, this week suggested that the controversial plot – about a college professor's obsession with the young daughter of his landlady – meant it was "doomed from the start".

The novel was filmed in 1962 by Stanley Kubrick – whose version of *A Clockwork Orange* was banned because of its disturbing violence – and starred James Mason as Humbert Humbert and Sue Lyon as Lolita.

Mr Lyne told *Entertainment Weekly* that he wanted to film a new version of *Lolita* because the original script, also by

Nabokov, was so terrible. "Nabokov's screenplay is as bad as the novel is magnificent," he said.

His search for the perfect script saw Harold Pinter and David Mamet try their hand at the adaptation before the job

went to Stephen Schiff, who writes for the *New Yorker*.

The director also wanted to make a more faithful adaptation of the 1955 novel; as a result some of the sexual scenes were so provocative that he used a body double instead of his child star.

But the problem is getting it shown. Distributors are fighting shy of the £31m movie following the withdrawal of the Oscar-winning producer Richard D Zanuck from the project; he had lent it respectability in the eyes of the Hollywood corporations.

Almost 2,000 teenage hopefuls turned up to audition for the part of Lolita, but Mr Lyne's difficulties are compounded by critical comments of the original child star, Lyon. Now 49, she says that playing the schoolgirl subject of an older man's paedophile fantasies ruined her life. "My destruction as a person dates from that movie. *Lolita* exposed me to temptation no girl of that age should undergo. I defy any pretty girl who is rocketed to stardom at 14 in a sex nymphet role to stay

on a level path thereafter."

Ms Lyon went through three broken marriages, took drugs and suffered manic depression.

Her attacks adds fuel to the political-correctness campaigners and the far right in

America, who believe Hollywood films should promote family values, not explore paedophilia and violence.

One of their biggest supporters is the Republican presidential candidate, Bob Dole. It is this pressure to rein in Hollywood which could damage the film's chances of being released – at least until after November's election.

"No one wants to be seen handling a film like that when Dole is leading the crusade to eliminate violence and sex in the movies," says Matt Mueller, editor of *Premiere* magazine.

"Part of the problem is that Lyne is contractually bound to deliver an 'R' rating. In America that means that anybody under 17 can see it if they are accompanied by an adult."

He believes that to get it Lyne may be forced to cut some of the more sexually explicit scenes – one is reputed to show Swain lolling nude on a bed and another shows her and Irons in bed – to get a distribution deal.

The Edgar Rice Burroughs Inc corporation wants the makers of *Jungle Heat* to pay unspecified damages, to stop the distribution of the film and to recall and destroy all copies of the movie.

Author's family sues makers of steamy Tarzan film



Jungle love: Johnny Weissmuller as Tarzan, with Jane. The actor starred in 19 films between 1932-1948

LOUISE JURY

In these days of sophisticated mores, when the "Me Tarzan, you Jane" school of social etiquette is verging on the politically incorrect, there are some people who still wish to defend the apeman's unblemished reputation.

In a bid to keep Tarzan's image "wholesome", the descendants of his creator, author Edgar Rice Burroughs, are suing the makers of a pornographic film and CD-Rom for vulgarising the jungle hero's image.

It cannot be denied that in the original 26 novels starring the Tarzan of the Apes character – and in the even more famous films – he strutted around skimpily dressed and was prone to clutching jungle-mate Jane to his many chest, claiming to protect her.

But he did not indulge in fellatio, sodomy, group sex or even straightforward intercourse, and the family of Edgar Rice Burroughs, who own the company which controls the Tarzan image, maintain he should not.

The family has accused *Jungle Heat*, a porn movie, of being "nothing more than a lewd, vulgar and highly offensive film".

While the character in the movie, also released in a French version entitled *Dard'zan: The Humiliation of Jane*, is called Tarzan only once, he goes by Tarzan's other name, Ape Man,

and shares many Tarzan traits, according to the family's legal team.

For example, Ape Man wears a loin cloth and carries a knife, he lives in the jungle and repeatedly emits the famous and unique Tarzan yell, he swings from vine to vine in the jungle, he rescues Jane from peril and he is accompanied by his animal friend, Cheeta, it said.

Burroughs, who died in 1950, founded the family corporation, Edgar Rice Burroughs Inc, in 1923, to control the image of Tarzan, who first swung from the trees in 1912.

The company is based in Tarzana, California, the community which was named after the character in 1930. Since then, it has licensed daily

comic strips, 46 feature films and more than 150 television shows in 72 countries.

But it did not approve the film, whose video jacket claims to "explore in exhausting detail the steamy passion that blazed between Jane and her Jungle King".

The suit names Ultimate Video of Chatsworth, California, Excalibur Entertainment of Fullerton, California, Thorn Distributors of Hauppauge, New York, and director Joe D'Amato of Italy.

The Edgar Rice Burroughs Inc corporation wants the makers of *Jungle Heat* to pay unspecified damages, to stop the distribution of the film and to recall and destroy all copies of the movie.

"Someone will pick up the film, I'm sure, but it could mean waiting until after the election. If Clinton gets in, it would not be so much of a problem," Mr Mueller added.

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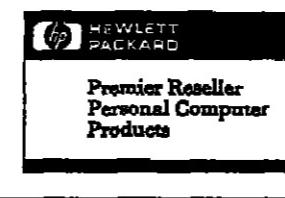
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protesters
mark
Burma's
expression
in blood

DEAN CHARLES

— Failed Burmese rebels shot down their own bloodied banner strikes to the eighth anniversary of the bloodiest days in a pro-democracy uprising against.

Several members of a group marched during a protest of the Burmese embassy in London and smeared their flag on the embassy wall, adding next to a banner.

The blood stains of a flag never be sponged and others wearing red bands, commemorated the 8 August 1988, when reds of people were killed by government troops as they marched for democracy. The 8-Aug pro-democracy movement gained much support from the international community and was recorded in history of the protesters said.

Even yesterday, after Russian reinforcements arrived in the city, the guerrillas were putting up fierce resistance, declaring that this was their gift to the president who had promised to

the people.

Residents called for stronger national pressure on Burma which has drawn Western attention for a recent down on the National League for Democracy party.

Witnesses said

no abnormal activity

in town hall, where most

a couple were killed as

crossed fire on deman-

ment eight years ago.

Flood-affected residents were

rescued by explosion-like

in the capital. Specula-

tion the city that floods

were off to mark the an-

cession of the uprising

as an international rela-

tion, condoning

the military government

rights abuses and

was enough concerned

the practice of forced

in the country

and Burma's in-

ternational rep-

utation was record-

ed in the world,

Wednesday, July 16,

head of the Chinese

state Union in Al Khor-

state of Rhamadan. It

had been prevented

from leaving by his

beliefs.

This was to be the

last meeting be-

fore Mr Chester,

who had been

invited to the

party at the air-

base in the morn-

ing.

The destruction in recent

years has been nothing com-

Rebels 'dominate' Chechen capital

Fierce battles continued yesterday between Chechen rebels and Russian forces in the Chechen capital, Grozny, with grenade-launchers, mortars and automatic weapons. The rebels claimed that the Russians lost 80 armoured vehicles, nine helicopters and a plane. The Russians denied losing a plane, but admitted heavy losses, including at least 70 dead and several hundred injured.

The Moscow-backed deputy Interior Minister, Yuri Pligun, said up to 2,000 rebels were "dominating the situation" in central Grozny. It is unlikely that the rebel band, consisting of only a few hundred men, can hold the city against the far superior numbers of federal troops. But the mere fact that they have caused so much death and destruction was a severe blow to Boris Yeltsin on the eve of his inauguration today as Russia's re-elected president.

Even yesterday, after Russian reinforcements arrived in the city, the guerrillas were putting up fierce resistance, declaring that this was their gift to the president who had promised to clear guerrillas from around

the compound of the pro-Moscow government in the city. A spokesman for the Russian command said the situation had improved since Wednesday when federal forces virtually lost control on the ground and could do little but attack the Chechens from the air. Even so, the leader of the raid, Shamil Basayev, notorious for having taken hundreds of civilians hostage in a hospital in southern Russia last year, declared scowling that, if a Russian delegation wished to make peace with him, they would be safe as the city was in his hands.

The International Committee for the Red Cross said it was "extremely concerned" about wounded civilians left unattended during three days of fighting. Many civilians slipped out of Grozny before the rebels entered the city on Tuesday. But hundreds stayed and have been cowering in cellars throughout

the onslaught. Despite the confrontation, however, after the inauguration, Mr Yeltsin is expected to go on holiday, leaving the problem of Chechnya to the Prime Minister, Victor Chernomyrdin — if the Communist-dominated State Duma re-confirms him in office. Mr Chernomyrdin, generally regarded as a dove on Chechnya, told MPs yesterday that the Grozny rebels would be rebuffed, but that all-out war was not the long-term solution to the region's problems.

Some commentators in the Moscow press are comparing the rebel raid on Grozny to the 1968 Tet offensive that showed the US it could not win the war in Vietnam and proved to be the turning point of that conflict.

Yesterday the leaders of two Muslim Russian republics, Tatarstan and Ingushetia, suggested peace might have a chance in Chechnya if Moscow brought in negotiators unaligned by any involvement in the war. They nominated the new National Security Chief, Alexander Lebed and the new Defence Minister, Igor Rodionov.

Yangtse floods again, killing 2,000 villagers

TERESA POOLE

Pekin — It seems to be an inevitable annual tragedy: China's summer rains begin, the Yangtze river and its tributaries rise to levels "not seen for decades", the dikes are breached, and terrible floods lay claim to central and southern provinces, killing thousands and wiping out whole villages and their crops.

In 1994 the summer flood death toll reached more than 5,000, and in 1995 almost 4,000.

After the downpour started last month, water levels rose quickly in half a dozen provinces in the 1990s, after repeated repairs simply cannot cope with bigger floods. This year, in Hubei alone, 300km of dikes have been destroyed.

Peking does not like to admit that a great deal more might be done. But, in an unprecedented step, the central government this year authorised provinces to approach international agencies themselves for help, an apparent admission that the situation was even more serious than usual. At the same time, however, the State Planning Minister, Chen Jinhus, has talking reassuringly of a national bumper harvest.

Torrential rains have dangerously swollen three of China's biggest rivers and officials have warned against epidemics in the wake of the floods.

The waters of the Yellow River, known as "China's sorrow" for its devastating floods throughout history, had risen to a historic high following several weeks of rain, an official said. Millions have lost their homes and grain stocks.

Along the Yangtze, soldiers and civilians have been manning dikes around the clock in the hope of preventing a greater catastrophe. Medical and sanitation teams have urgently been distributing chlorine to the millions of people whose water supplies are now contaminated by sewage and rotting animals.

The destruction in recent years has been nothing com-

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Fighting back: A Chechen rebel fires a grenade launcher as the Russian offensive builds up in Grozny. Photograph: AP

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international

US air sorties in Gulf anger Iran

ANDREW MARSHALL
and KATHERINE BUTLER

The United States has stepped up pressure on Iran in the Gulf, launching air sorties over territory claimed by Tehran, the Pentagon confirmed yesterday.

Washington is gradually intensifying its campaign against Iran, which it accuses of involvement in international terrorism. It has imposed sanctions on companies which do business there and made veiled threats of military action. But so far the main impact has been to antagonise its allies.

Iran complained this week to the United Nations that American warplanes violated its air-

space last Saturday. It said that a US fighter flew over Bushehr in the Gulf and another violated Iranian airspace over the disputed island of Abu Musa.

The US denied it had violated Iranian airspace, though it said that there were military exercises in the area. A US Navy official in the Gulf told Reuter news agency: "Our forces were participating in an exercise called Rugged Nautilus. Flights were conducted in international airspace in the Gulf. No violation of Iranian airspace occurred."

"But the US did confirm that its aircraft flew over Abu Musa, which is disputed between Iran and the United Arab Emirates, saying that this

was international airspace.

This tiny island at the mouth of the Gulf is the focus of considerable interest. Jane's *Intelligence Review* said this week that Iran was building up its naval strength and firepower there.

Jane's noted that a new civilian airport there could be used by military craft, and said that Iran had placed Hawk and SA-6 air defence missiles on the island, as well as upgraded Silkworm surface-to-surface missiles.

The timing of the US over-flight is significant. The US has implied that it believes Iran might be behind an explosion which killed 19 US servicemen in Saudi Arabia in June. And last Friday - while the exercise in the

Gulf was under way - US Defence Secretary, William Perry, warned that the US would take strong action against any country proved to be involved, leading to speculation that military action was planned.

America has also put in place sanctions against companies which do business in Iran, infuriating its allies. The European Union issued a formal warning to Washington yesterday that it could face retaliation for new anti-terrorism legislation threatening foreign companies with sanctions if they invest in Iran or Libya.

Ireland, which currently holds the EU presidency, delivered a strongly-worded protest note to senior US State Department officials through its ambassador in Washington, Dermot Gallagher. He and senior European Commission officials were instructed to express the Union's fury at the so-called D'Amato law signed by President Bill Clinton on Monday.

The US move has also received an implicit rebuke from two of its allies, Turkey and Malaysia. Turkish Prime Minister, Necmettin Erbakan, is visiting Iran at the weekend, and is expected to seal an agreement with Iran for a \$20bn natural gas deal. And Malaysian Foreign Minister, Abdulrahman, said he would discuss the matter with fellow members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations.

the D'Amato legislation could seriously damage the security of the Union's energy supplies. The law requires the US to impose punitive sanctions on foreign firms investing \$40m or more in oil or gas projects in either Iran or Libya.

The letter warned that the EU reserves the right to defend its interests. Referring to the Union's "critical dialogue" with Iran the note said that although committed to countering terrorism EU governments did not believe that objective could be served by enacting laws which penalise friendly governments or violate international agreements.

European governments fear

SIGNIFICANT SHORTS

Turkish Cypriot authorities warned that a plan for Greek Cypriot and European bikers to force their way across the divided island's UN-patrolled buffer zone threatens peace. Their warning came on top of threats by the Turkish military to shoot anyone who crosses the Green Line buffer zone at a bikers' mass rally at the weekend.

Hundreds of bikers from several European countries were to take a ship from Greece to Cyprus ahead of a bid to ride into the Turkish-occupied parts of Cyprus on Sunday in what they say is an attempt to publicise the Cyprus problem. *Reuters - Nicosia*

Gambians besieged polling stations to vote in a referendum on a new constitution to return the West African country to elected government. Army ruler Captain Yahya Jammeh, who toppled the civilian government in July 1994, has promised to lift the ban on political parties after the referendum, giving them only a month to prepare for presidential elections in September. *Reuters - Banjul*

Israel's justice minister resigned after the attorney general ordered a police investigation into whether he had interfered with a legal investigation. Yaakov Neeman is reportedly suspected of trying to influence a witness in the corruption trial of former Interior Minister, Achik Deri. *AP - Jerusalem*

Saddam Hussein rejected accusations that he spent a fortune on building palaces while his people endured poverty: "Enemies [of Iraq] ... have alleged that palaces and guest houses were built in Iraq as Saddam's palaces ... They are the people's palaces. They are built and owned by the people and are the venues of various activities on national and social occasions." *Reuters - Baghdad*

Gdansk shipyard was declared bankrupt yesterday bringing to close months of speculation about the future of the historic site where the Solidarity trade union was born. The bankruptcy will make it easier for Gdansk to restructure its debts and break off unviable ship-building contracts. But the bankruptcy will not protect 3,600 shipyard workers, more than half of the work force, who will lose their jobs when Gdansk continues operations as a new enterprise, the New Gdansk Shipyard. *AP - Gdansk*

The corpse of Vietnamese man who police believe was murdered in a turf war among cigarette smugglers has been found. The brutal competition has caused the deaths of at least 40 Vietnamese in Germany this year. The body was found in an East Berlin apartment. The police recognised him as a cigarette smuggler from Vietnam, who had been living illegally in Germany after his application for asylum was turned down. *AP - Berlin*

Thousands of rubber sandals are washing up on remote Australian islands and polluting beaches, an Australian politician said. Julian McGauran of the conservative National party said an investigation showed sandals thrown away by Indonesian factories were washing up on the islands. *Reuters - Canberra*

Drinking beer in China could be hazardous to your health. At least 15 people were injured and four disabled by exploding beer bottles in 11 Chinese provinces and cities in the second half of 1996, the *Economic Daily* said. *Reuters - Beijing*



Off the menu: Parisians reaching out for some of the 50 tons of free produce yesterday. Farmers were overwhelmed

Photograph: AP

Republican running mate: Search for candidate to boost campaign

Dole ready to choose his man

RUPERT CORNWELL
Washington

His party's furious internal row over abortion apparently patched over - at least for now - prospective Republican nominee Bob Dole yesterday focused on choosing a vice-presidential running mate to give the greatest possible lift to his uphill struggle for the White House.

Mr Dole's deliberations have taken place in the secrecy he relishes. Aides have let slip only that he is "very close" to a decision and that the final shortlist is down to three. Mr Dole is expected to make the announcement tomorrow in his home town of Russell, Kansas, two days before the nominating convention opens in San Diego.

With all hope apparently abandoned of netting either retired General Colin Powell or Christine Todd Whitman, the Governor of New Jersey, two stars who could add real excitement to the ticket, Mr Dole

is reportedly concentrating on a small group led by Senators John McCain of Arizona and Connie Mack of Florida, Governor John Engler of Michigan and Carroll Campbell, the former Governor of South Carolina.

But in the last few days the names of Jack Kemp, the prominent supply-sider and former Bush Cabinet member, and Donald Rumsfeld, Defense Secretary in the Ford administration, have also begun to feature. Both were closely involved in formulating Mr Dole's economic plan, centred on a 15 per cent across-the-board tax cut.

Whatever happens, the vice-presidential choice and the abortion issue are closely linked - if only because after the truce secured with the convention's dominant pro-life faction, Mr Dole dare not risk their ire once more by choosing a running mate like General Powell or Ms Whitman, who explicitly favours abortion rights.



Names in the frame: clockwise, from top left: Connie Mack, John Engler, Carroll Campbell and John McCain

The deal reached by the platform committee on Wednesday evening is little more than a figleaf for the defeated pro-choice activists, providing merely that their unsuccessful

amendments to the existing commitment to a constitutional amendment banning abortion will be published as an "appendix" to the platform. This document, destined to be forgotten as soon as the convention is over, should thus be painlessly approved by delegates on Monday evening, without the embarrassing public floorfight dredged by the Dole camp.

The spotlight thereafter will fall on the vice-presidential candidate. Each mooting contender has advantages. Mr McCain is an engaging and outspoken authority on foreign policy with a war record of gallantry to match Mr Dole's. Mr Mack is a rising star in the Senate and in a position to shore up Mr Dole's wobbly support in Florida, a key Southern State which the Republicans must win to have a chance of capturing the White House. Much the same goes for Mr Campbell.

Governor Engler meanwhile is a proven tax-cutter in Michigan, a key swing state, and a perfect salesman for the Dole economic plan - though perhaps less perfect than Mr Kemp, not only a tax-cutter but one of the most popular effective campaigners in Republican ranks.

And Mr Dole, not noted for his ability on the stump, needs all the help he can get. A *New York Times* poll yesterday put President Clinton ahead by 56 to 34 per cent, a lead that does not change if the Texas billionaire Ross Perot enters the fray.

Early release for 'vampire rapist'

PHIL DAVIDSON
Miami

A man dubbed the "Vampire Rapist" because he drank his victim's blood was freed from a Florida prison yesterday, after serving only 10 years of his 25-year term, because of good behaviour and other reductions.

John Crutchley, 49, was driven from the Raiford jail in north-west Florida to a halfway

house in Orlando after several cities said he was not welcome and many Floridians expressed outrage.

Although he is now subject to a 50-year probation period, he is free to leave the state-run Orlando Probation and Restitution Centre whenever he finds a home and job, state officials said.

Crutchley, a bespectacled former engineer, was convicted of kidnapping and raping a 19-

year-old woman hitchhiker at his beachfront home in Malabar on Florida's east coast in 1986.

Naked and handcuffed, she escaped through a bathroom window and later described to police how he had drained her blood - tests showed she had lost almost half her total - with a syringe and drunk it during an 18-hour ordeal. Crutchley was also suspected of kidnapping and raping a 19-

year-old woman in Orlando after several cities said he was not welcome and many Floridians expressed outrage.

A judge sentenced him to 25 years, far beyond the recommended 12-17 years for the kidnapping and rape, but prison rules automatically took 3,000 days off the term and he received a further 2,250 days off for good behaviour.

Local county sheriff Kevin Beary said: "I think the system screwed up."

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that a plan to
allow voters to force their way
out of the EU has been threat-
ened by the threat of a vote
by the European countries
in Cyprus ahead of a bid
to join parts of Cyprus. The Sun
has published the Cyprus

plan to vote
to return the West
Bank to the Palestinian
government in July
as part of a political package after
a month to prepare for
the peace - *Hanafi*

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Don't leave the best and brightest guessing

Those first year undergraduates will not be chuffed. Imagine it. Tanned and skinny after basket weaving in Africa, or learning Spanish in Cuba, they return bearing photos and trendy ethnic objects, eager to show off to their school. Yet to their horror, since they deferred their entry, the universities have had a change of heart. A £300 bill for top-up fees awaits them when they arrive.

It's bound to happen sooner or later if we go on like this. Tony Higgins, chief executive of the University and Colleges Admissions Service, warns that it might happen in 1997; so the travelling teenagers concerned are the ones awaiting their A-levels this week. But to drift into a haphazard system of top-up fees by default would be the worst possible response to the financial problems that universities and students face.

From the universities' point of view, it is understandable. Their funds per student have been squeezed year by year as they meet the government demands to take a huge numbers of extra students. The rise in teenagers staying on for higher education has been phenomenal; and is one of the few great and enduring educational achievements of this government. One in three teenagers now goes to university. However, the government's failure adequately to finance the expansion has created a crisis.

Universities such as Oxford, Cambridge and the LSE, who rely on expensive intensive tuition methods, or who

hope to compete for top international academics, are struggling to find the money they need to keep the standard of research and education as high as they need. They have tried selling chairs in everything from genetics to political philosophy, seeking sponsorship for research, selling academic advice, and scrumming donations from former students. The latest wheeze, touted often over the last few years, is to charge new undergraduates well.

But make no mistake: allowing universities unilaterally to start charging fees, because we failed to come up with something better, would be a terrible mistake. Middle-class parents will pay the money up front to make sure their children still get a good education. But those who cannot afford it will turn down their premier place in favour of a cheaper institution, and possibly less challenging course, somewhere else.

Whatever happens, we must not return to a situation where elite education is distributed according to families' ability to pay, rather than merit. Nothing is more likely to restore the worst features of the British class system. Everyone knows a great education from an elite university can win you a nice job, high earnings and the prospect of continuing power and privilege. Poor but brilliant young people should not be denied their chance to compete for such prizes by an inhibiting charge.

Nor will things look much more promising if these prospective students have to borrow on the private market.

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Should they stumble finding work when they leave, interest rates could rocket upwards, leaving them completely in hock to the banks. Cautious but top-class prospective students could still miss out on the best education in their fear of incurring heavy debts.

What are the alternatives? One would be for the expensive universities to concede their elite status, and muck in with everyone else. All that money invested in the education of a few clever clogs could be more fairly distributed across everyone else instead. But there has already been too much levelling down in the British education system already, before the bright people get to university. It would be a disaster to inflict that culture on universities, too. Moreover, it would be economic idiocy not to continue taking advantage of the excellence in our best universities. Higher taxes are not an option in the present climate. But if we are to protect the best, we need to pay for the best.

David Blunkett has suggested stopping grants and replacing them with graduate loans instead. The savings on student maintenance could presumably be channelled back into university funding. So long as repayment schedules are linked to earnings and ability to pay, it should not prove an obstacle to many students. After all, why shouldn't graduates bear some of the burden of their education, so

long as it doesn't deter them from taking the degree. The chances are they will earn considerably more for the rest of their lives, thanks to the money the state has invested in them. Australia, the United States and countless other countries operate student loan schemes, where graduates gradually pay off their debts throughout their lives.

A fully fledged graduate tax would be even fairer. Suppose graduates had to pay, say, an extra 1 per cent a year for 15 years, rather than repaying regular amounts until their debts were paid off. Then the City broker would pay more in total than the teacher. The amount graduates contributed would reflect the personal financial reward they received across their lifetime from their degree. But it would not take away the incentive to get that degree in the first place.

Alternatively, the government could allow universities to charge different top-up fees and help students to borrow to cover them as well as maintenance. Why not let the Oxford graduate borrow more than the Strathclyde graduate, in order to pay for that more expensive Oxbridge education? The average Oxbridge graduate earns more later in life.

Whatever the options, whatever the alternatives, we could do with a little more guidance from our politicians. David Blunkett has set out his stall. The Government, on the other hand, has ducked behind Sir Ron Dearing, who is due to report on the funding of universities well after the next election. Uni-

versities would be completely wrong to institute top-up fees unilaterally before we have all seen and discussed Sir Ron's report.

We cannot all bury our heads in sand waiting for the venerable Sir Ron. Politicians should be leading the public discussion over the direction of higher education, not trailing around after increasingly desperate vice-chancellors. The future of this year's A-level students is already at stake.

Rich friends in hot places

Climb the greasy pole of politics, and your holidays suddenly change. Look at this year's getaways. The lower ranks carry on much as before. Ann Widdecombe is walking Wales. No surprise there, except that she is travelling by daylight. Harriet Harman plans cassoulets in the Dordogne. John Prescott will be taking a short break.

But Tony and John are a different matter. For them the electronic gates of millionaire's villas in (respectively) Tuscany and the Riviera swing silently open. Which prompts an odd question: what is it about rich people that makes party leaders want to share their holes with them? And what is it about party leaders that makes them such good house-guests? It is a puzzle.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Rich rewards for parents of twins

Sir: I would not want expectant mothers of twins to be too depressed after reading Ruth Picardie's article (7 August). Twins certainly change your life, but so does any excursion into parenthood.

My own identical girls are now 10 and they have been a joy and a challenge since their birth. I can remember sitting with my husband in the hospital canteen having a "last" meal before taking them home, and reflecting on the quote "the condemned ate a hearty breakfast".

We progressed through the early days of desperately trying to breast feed both and ending up with the sensible compromise of breast at alternate feeds during the day but definitely a bottle each for the night feed, and a bottle of Guinness for me! We passed on through the fascinating spectacle of the girls alternately being the "leader" of the pair, and then on to rota for who sits on Mummy's lap, who has their hair washed first, who has first pick of the hand-me-down clothes etc.

The rewards of parenthood are double for the parents of twins. It is all certainly hard work, but support is always there from the health visitors at the beginning; through neighbours and friends (even if Granny no longer lives round the corner); through the local twins' club (a branch of TABMA, the Twins and Multiple Birth Association), always a rich source of practical and moral support; and through teachers, for whom twins always hold fascination.

Parents of twins will learn to compromise, prioritise, not worry about the non-essentials in life, and emerge hopefully intact as a family with two children who, possibly because they have to fight for your attention, value it all the more and become your loving friends. A rich reward indeed.

"ALERIE NEWMAN

Horsham

West Sussex

Sir: As a twin, I might be expected to be shocked by the abortion of one twin. However, I am rather outraged by the voices raised in opposition. Why is it that whenever the words "ethics" and "rights" are mentioned in this context, it always means a reduction in our rights to act as we see fit? Maybe the woman involved will feel bad afterwards, but this will probably have more to do with the social pressure from groups such as the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children, than with her abortion. She might have felt a lot worse if her own life, and that of her children, was ruined by her failure to cope with the twins.

I am all for a moral approach, as I am sure are most people, but this should mean the right of adults to make decisions for themselves, and take the consequences.

Dr DAVID HALL

Newcastle upon Tyne

The long list of British informers

Sir: You could have added a few more to your list of informers ("Watching me, watching you", 6 August): bunks, who now have to report suspicions of money laundering - it's a crime for them not to (Criminal Justice Act 1988); photograph developers, who are

on the lookout for dodgy pictures; schools, if they suspect drug dealing or use; housing authorities, who must report suspected illegal immigrants; travel agents, who have signed a deal with customs and excise to report suspect travel agents; employers, who are about to be signed up to stop illegal immigrants; social workers who suspect child abuse; airline officials who suspect illegal travellers; solicitors, who should even break with legal privilege if, say, a child is being abused or is about to be abducted; doctors, who might spot drunken drivers, the Inland Revenue (the Chancellor of the Exchequer had to apologise when they offered information to the police back in 1989); and journalists, always being asked for video footage taken at demonstrations, riots and so on (to their credit they often refuse).

We can't get enough of it.

T THOMAS
Leeds
West Yorkshire

Sir: With reference to Sara Maitland's article on benefit fraud ("Beat-a-Cheat is not the village bobby", 7 August), she obviously has no experience of living on a council estate, particularly in a small village, where she implies that anonymous helpline are unjustified.

Until recently my parents lived opposite a man who had illegally acquired a car which had been specially adapted for a handicapped person, complete with a wheelchair lift. Much as they, and most of the other neighbours, would have liked to have brought this to the attention

of the appropriate authorities, and had the car re-assigned to a genuine case, they were too afraid of retaliation to do so.

In a more serious vein, when my mother called the police about some young children (all under 10 years old) sniffing glue near their back garden, they had milk bottles thrown at them and the back fence set on fire, a frightening experience for anyone, particularly horrible for someone in their late seventies.

GERALDINE BLAKE

London W13

Sir: You seem to suggest that wacky schemes such as Neighbourhood Watch are turning us into a nation of snitches. What is wrong with citizens keeping an eye out for the safety of themselves and those around them? Isn't that just the sort of spirit we want to reintroduce, after the rampant greed and individualism of the Eighties?

MATTHEW NEWNHAM

Edinburgh

Sir: There is something deeply unsavoury about the benefit fraud hotline. I think it is the Government's job to correctly ascertain who is entitled to benefit and who isn't. If some builders, plumbers, and decorators are supposedly moonlighting while claiming benefit, surely it is the Benefits Agency which is at fault for not sufficiently investigating the claimants in the first place.

MICHAEL D MITCHELL

Flackwell Heath

Buckinghamshire

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, and include a daytime telephone number. Fax: 0171-293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk

Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

Where have all the workers gone?

Sir: Colin Brown and Diane Coyle (report, 7 August) tell us about the Bank of England's warning on interest rates. However, the quarterly report also had something interesting to say about employment.

The Tories claim to have achieved a jobs miracle, thanks to deregulation. They say that unemployment has come down faster than in previous business cycles.

Then along come the Bank to burst their bubble. Yesterday's report said: "Almost the entire net performance in the 1990s compared to the 1980s was unaccounted for ... by the rise in inactivity." In plain English, unemployment has been falling not because more jobs have been created but because more people have left the workforce altogether.

As Bob Dylan might ask: "Where have all the workers gone?" Much of the drop can only be explained by people being driven off the benefit register and therefore off the records altogether. A great Tory disappearing trick rather than an economic miracle!

The Labour Party is committed to help people out of benefit into jobs

- including 250,000 young people - rather than drive people into the statistical twilight zone.

JOHN PRESCOTT MP

Deputy Leader of the Opposition

House of Commons

London SW1

Lasdun for the National Theatre

Sir: We, Emeritus, past and present Professors of Architecture, join in strongly endorsing Jonathan Glancy's plea in "The secret facelift": can you see the join?" (30 July) that the trustees of the National Theatre should henceforth employ its architect, Sir Denys Lasdun, at least as a formal consultant in their moves to upgrade this widely acclaimed institution of drama and of architecture, particularly by young in heart.

As trustees their responsibility is to hold the spirit of this outstanding example of Rational Modern Architecture as it exists in purity. This does not mean falling prey to today's commercialism in the name of "user-friendliness." Despite the planning consent achieved and the Lottery funding promised, benefactors who might have helped the NT with the further 25 per cent of monies needed are asked to consider the reality of the altered building's meaning to generations yet to come.

PATRICK HODGKINSON, GORDON BENSON, NEAVE BROWN, PETER CLEGG, PETER COOK, EDWARD CULLINAN, TREVOR DANNATT, SIR JAMES DUNBAR-NASMYTH, TONY FRETTON, CHARLES MACCULLUM, IZI METZSTEIN, IVOR RICHARDS, JOSEPH RYKES, DAVID SHALEV, ROBERT TAVERNOR, MICHAEL WILFORD

University of Bath

Surfing UK

Sir: I was most surprised to read the opening sentence of "You don't have to be an Australian" (6 August): "Legend has it that a group of travelling Australian lifeguards brought surfing to Britain in the early Sixties".

In 1949 I was stationed as a national serviceman in Cornwall, and during that gloriously hot summer I and my fellow officer cadets took every opportunity in off-duty time to dash to the beaches of Newquay or Polzeath, where surfboards could be hired quickly at the cheerful shops which also sold ice-cream, beach balls, spades and buckets.

As beginners, we preferred the less crowded sands of Polzeath to those at Newquay, where the many surfers were a menace to the swimmers and paddlers. Even there, however, I never saw surfers standing up on their boards, and it may be this more difficult art that the Australians introduced later.

PETER COOPER
Norwich

Olympic wisdom

Sir: In the light of the recent articles on the commercialism prevalent at the Atlanta Olympic Games, might I offer the following from Montaigne: "Pythagoras was wont to say, that our life retires to [resembles] the great and populous Assembly of the Olympics, whereas some exercise the Glory of the Prize in those Contests, and others carry Merchandise to sell for profit."

MIR SUMMELL
Southampton, Hampshire

Why the royals can't be like us

Sir: Melvyn Bragg is right ("Prisoners of the fourth estate", 5 August). This country needs a monarchy but the royal family will have to reform itself if it is to survive through the next century.

The navel that the royals must grasp is that they can not be like the rest of us. It is their misfortune to have been born into an image-hungry and media-dominated age but they do nothing themselves to discourage the spotlight of attention.

If there is a point to a modern monarchy, it is as a politically neutral focus for national loyalties. It is the royal family's duty to provide us with that focus. The media needs a clear image: the enthroned monarch surrounded by a family committed to royal service; a symbol demonstrating dedication, self-sacrifice and austerity; a family freed from the everyday cares that their subjects endure, but bartered for the everyday pleasures of those same subjects.

It is a great thing to know one's place. It is not the place of a royal to tell us how difficult life is or how the country should be run or what constitutes good architecture. Such chatter can safely be left to the rest of us fortunate enough to be born of humbler stock.

Duty has never been easy or pleasant. This century millions of our countrymen and women died doing their duty. They leave a lot to live up to. It is only by demonstrating a similar commitment to duty that the royal family has any chance of winning back our respect. So long as they insist on behaving like film stars or media celebrities they will be treated as such.

RICK STROUD
London SW10

Stamps: may the best woman win

12 analysis

Even if there is intelligent life out there, let's not take the dangerous and expensive step of trying to reach it, argues Charles Arthur

Let the Martians come to us

Daniel Goldin, the head of the US space agency Nasa, is not a man to let the occasion for a few grandiloquent words slip easily by. So he opened Wednesday's press conference in Washington, called to announce some plausible evidence that there was once life on Mars, with a few well-chosen high-octane phrases.

"I have been speaking to world leaders of space," he said. "Some of them were almost childlike in their excitement... I invited them to join us... In the next decade our objective is to send an armada of spacecraft to the other planets in our solar system, and detect planets around other stars."

Following the two-hour exposition – which amounted to a crash course in planetary evolution theory and techniques of scanning electron microscopy – the media were sold on the idea of getting to Mars. So were some of the scientists lined up to speak about their paper.

"We are talking about exploration," one intoned gravely, clearly also stricken with the grandiloquence virus. "It is important that this country keeps its aims of exploration, and the pioneer spirit. There are new worlds to explore in space, but we have to be prepared to invest in them. When we lose that will, such nations perish."

Meanwhile, Bill Clinton, supping the zeitgeist and no doubt with one eye on the feel-good factor in this election year, made a Kennedy-like pronouncement. "I am determined the American space programme will put its full intellectual power and technological prowess behind the search for further evidence of life on Mars," he told an eager group of reporters.

And just for good measure, Mr Goldin wrapped it all up with the declaration: "At the emotional level, we are a very bold nation. Nasa will be ready to take the next step. If we have to take sample missions earlier than expected, we will do it. If we have to dig into the surface of Mars, we will. If we have to do that digging with humans, we will – safely."

Pew. While I had been aware that the US was on a high after its coverage of the Olympics, I hadn't thought they really wanted to enter the interplanetary high jump. My first reaction, listening to those stirring words a safe 6,000 miles away, was that the participants ought to be tested for excess testosterone.

For although Mr Goldin might make it sound as though heading off to Mars would just be a question of getting NBC to do the coverage and inviting a few countries round to help in the competition, the fact is that nobody who matters is in any hurry to get people on Mars – even if this new research is confirmed as correct (which it still hasn't been).

Why the lack of urgency? Because sending people to Mars would be dangerous, enormously expensive, and most unlikely to tell us anything that we cannot find out already.

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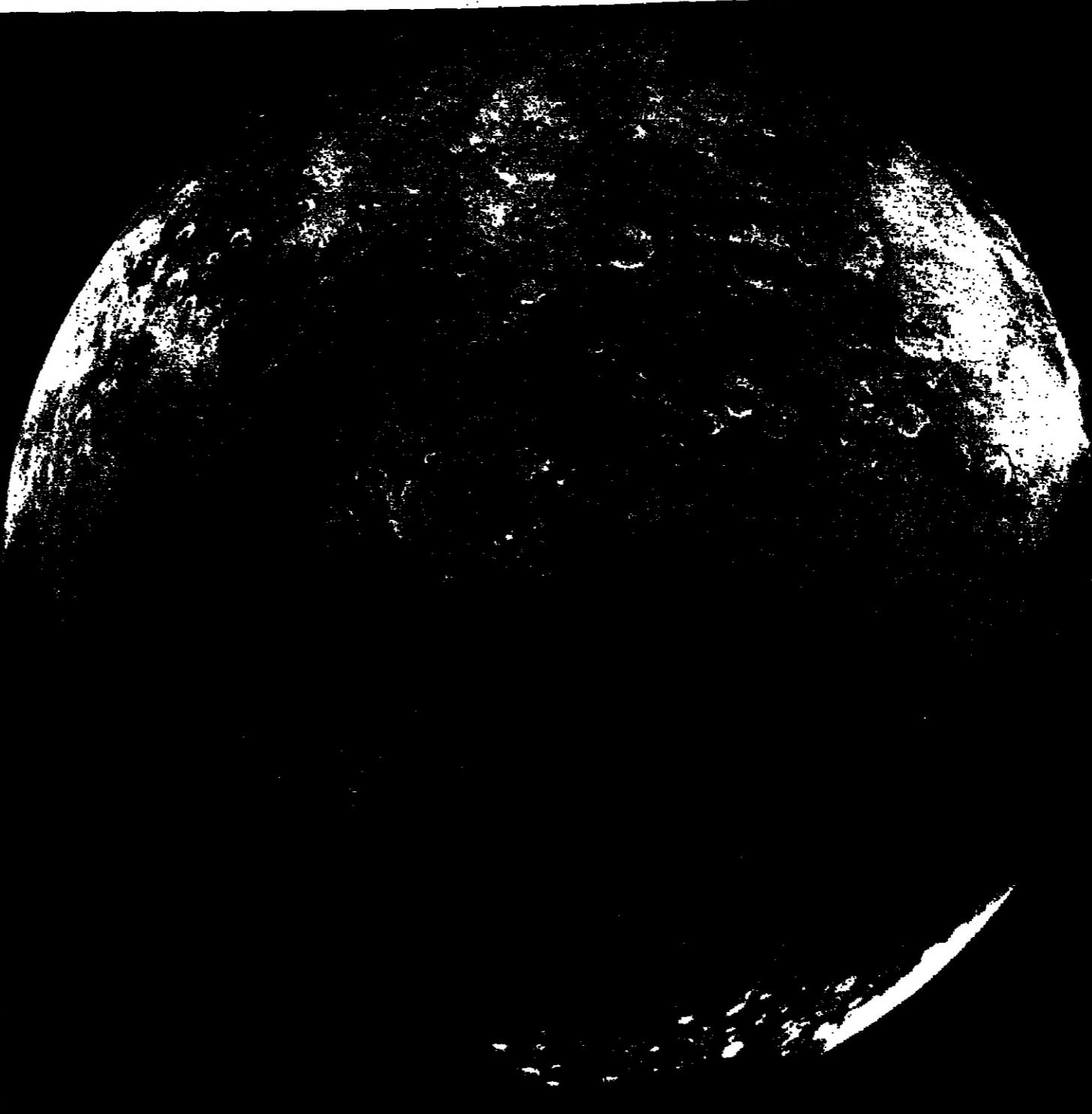
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New world: Nasa's chief makes it sound easy for us to send men to Mars, but the reality is a little different

Nasa/Reuters

care, most notably. Nasa has not escaped those cuts. Is it really sensible to allow signs of life (which, remember, are not proof positive) to stampede us into spending money that might be better spent on science at home – or even on other humans at home?

It could be that the wisest move would be to keep examining the samples that we have, and to stay with the approach that served us well in this case: let the aliens come to us. But if they do, it might be sensible to wary.

With 100 billion or so Sun-like stars in the Milky Way, the odds of life having emerged around one, or

many, of them is very high. In that case, the odds of other intelligent life having emerged must also be very high. We are presently beaming out signals to space proclaiming our existence: TV programmes from the 1950s have by now passed several thousand stars.

As Malcolm Young, professor in psychology at the University of Newcastle, remarked to me yesterday: "We are presently tweeting loudly like nestlings in a wood in which there may be hungry cats."

Biologists, he said, call this a failure of crypsis. Nestlings that survive are about to protect them; otherwise

they shut up (or get eaten). "Even if the transmissions can't be decoded by our audience, the fact of their existence means there are resources in this system that could be of significant interest."

It starts to sound rather worrying. Some people argue that any aliens that could reach us would already have the capability to destroy themselves – but would have evolved far enough not to use it. Evolution doesn't work that way, Young retorts. "You could say the same about us, but would you like to be a tiger, white rhino, or mountain gorilla?"

It's all reminiscent of the science

fiction short story which tells of a race of aliens that comes in peace, ends war, cures disease, and makes humanity stronger, fitter, better. A few lucky people are invited to visit the home planet – a veritable Eden, they are told. The fact that they don't return seems to prove it. One cynic finds an alien book by enormous effort he manages to translate the title: "To Serve Man". Impressed that altruism really has arrived, he volunteers for the next trip out.

Unfortunately, by the time his number comes up he has translated the first few words. It's a cookery book.

much of a rarity. As the International Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence (SETI) gather momentum, we may confidently expect to hear our first cosmic 'hello' in the not too distant future.

Charles Wickensmith

The writer is Professor of Applied Mathematics and Astronomy at the University of Waterloo, Ontario

We'll soon hear our first cosmic 'hello'

THE CASE FOR
O ne implication of the meteorite find is that life on both Mars and Earth was seeded from outside from comets.

We know that these so-called "inner planets" were fiercely bombarded by cometary objects for a full half billion years after they were formed. Life began when the bombardment abated, about 4 billion years ago. The discovery of complex organic

molecules in interstellar dust, as well as in dust from comets, pointed to the correctness of this general picture of the dispersal of life that was first advocated by Sir Fred Hoyle and myself in the 1970s.

The building blocks of life, which may be as complex as bacteria and viruses, appear now to be widespread, for if bacteria are found on Mars, they would surely have been dispersed throughout the entire planetary system.

The recent discoveries of planets around nearby stars add credence to the idea that many billions of inhabited Earth-like planets exist in our galaxy alone. Of

the 100 billion Sun-like stars in our galaxy it would seem reasonable to expect that one per cent of these have planetary systems like our

own. At the very least, the universe must be teeming with microbial life.

It would of course be naive to suggest that all life evolves as it has done on Earth. One would expect rather to find parallel evolutionary processes starting from the same cosmic building blocks to occur on every habitable planet in the universe.

Intelligent life cannot be

much of a rarity. As the International Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence (SETI) gather momentum, we may confidently expect to hear our first cosmic 'hello' in the not too distant future.

Charles Wickensmith

The writer is Professor of Applied Mathematics and Astronomy at the University of Waterloo, Ontario

longish line of stationary traffic, leading up to some lights. On the left is a bus lane. If many cars use the bus lane to jump the line, then law-abiding drivers like me could be stuck here till kingdom come (up to six minutes). In my rear view mirror I see a Ford Probe, being driven by a young man in a suit. He is dithering, but I think he may be about to take the naughty route.

My fantasy options are these: a) to pull out sufficiently far as not to be wholly in the bus lane myself, but to deny Probeman access to it. But what if a bus is following him? b) to make impotent finger-pointing motions, while mouthing "it's a bloody bus lane, and my watch shows it's very much still between 8 am and 6 pm, mush!" c) as he pulls in front of me, I get out of the car, and walk over to the unmarked police vehicle stuck in front of me. I tell the occupant that I am a journalist on a national newspaper writing a piece on the enforcement of traffic regu-

lations and I was just won-

dering what they were planning to do about the guy in the Probe? Two minutes later I sail past, as Probeman pulls over and forced to show his documents. And explain why his road-tax is three months out of date.

Poetic, eh? Sure. I feel bad that I have at least one of these fantasies every day. But I would argue that this form of internalised conflict role-playing can do good. It means that I have imagined most situations before they happen, and I have a skewed idea whether or not I can win. Not like my friend Rebecca, who found herself confronting a queue jumper at an airport check-in this week. As she squared up to the young man in a suit she heard herself tell him that he had acted "disobligingly". "Don't you realize," she demanded shrilly, "that this is how wars start?" Then she, he and the whole queue started to laugh. "No cojones," Miles Kingston is on holiday

We've been together most of the week, and I think that I know you well enough to share a few secrets. I want to tell you about my fantasies, about my secret interior life, the things that I think about in those unoccupied moments when travelling to work, or in the lift, or queuing.

But what is really embarrassing is that these are not carnal fantasies. They don't involve whipped cream, fur and the characters from *Upstairs, Downstairs*. No, these are fantasies in which I imagine that fellow passengers, lift-users and customers – the people I bump into while negotiating the more mundane features of everyday life – offend me, provoke me, or attack me. And I daydream about how they will respond, and how they will respond to my response, until an entire ladder of escalation – complete with dialogue and actions – is sketched out in my mind.

Here are a couple of examples:

Fantasy One: I am standing in a long and ill-defined queue (many queues these days seem to have multiple points of entry, blurring the clear distinctions between arriving, say, 34th and 35th). It may be a queue for tickets or for a delayed bus. I have been waiting for some time. Out of the corner of my eye I spot a young man in a suit sidling up at right-angles to the line.

He comes and stands next to me, on the pretext of reading a poster on the wall, or tying his laces. Then, having waited his moment, he insinuates a part of his anatomy – or perhaps a briefcase, or umbrella – between me and the person in front. We both know that his plan is for the rest of him to follow, inch by inch until the *fut* is *accompli*. If he succeeds, not only will he have my place, but he will have had my metaphorical *cojones*.

So what shall I do to prevent my unmanliness? In the first instance I must march stealth with stealth. As he withdraws.

slides his case forward, mine will also be on the move, but more quickly! Bang! His runs into the side of mine. Our eyes meet. I have won, for any police officer or insurance company would adjudge him to be at fault. He withdraws.

But suppose I have no weapon? Then I will try the "innocent bystander" technique. As his briefcase moves, so will I. The result will be a stumble, a small yelp of pain, a look of hurt surprise on his face. "How did that...?" He will apologise, and remove the offending object. Victory.

Fantasy Two: I join a

queue jumper at an airport check-in this week. As she squared up to the young man in a suit she heard herself tell him that he had acted "disobligingly".

"Don't you realize," she demanded shrilly, "that this is how wars start?" Then she, he and the whole queue started to laugh. "No cojones," Miles Kingston is on holiday

the commentators

Here comes the Clarke boom, with all its grief

**We
need
more
proof
CASE AGAINST**

It is the week of the poisoned chalice; the week when, quite suddenly, people have started to acknowledge that the Tories might conceivably win the election after all. For even before the help from Ms Short, the opinion polls had started to show a clear narrowing of the gap. Whether this narrowing is really meaningful is another matter, but there is at least a possibility that the Tories might have to cope with their own economic legacy.

On the face of it that might not seem too unwelcome a prospect. After all if they were to win, it would have been thanks to the aura of economic success – low inflation, low interest rates, falling unemployment, decent growth, modest tax cuts, and a sharp rise in consumer spending. Are these apparent successes a mirage, a con trick? Not completely, for these are the fundamentals of long-term success. But there is poison mixed in, and the poison is called "boom".

Some politicians have smirks or sneers attached to their names, as in Thatcherism or Blairite. But the

names of Tory chancellors tend to become associated with economic excess, as in the Maudling boom, the Barber boom or the Lawson boom. It now looks very much as though the next six months will see a Clarke boom, not perhaps quite as red-blooded a fellow as the others of the tribe, but bouncy enough to give the next government considerable grief.

You can see the boom in this month's car sales, which will probably be the best for seven years; in the rise (at last) in house prices and the associated surge in sales of things people buy when they move home, like carpets and washing machines. But there is much more to come. In the next few months many people will suddenly feel quite a lot richer. And then, in about 18 months, equally suddenly, the mini-boom will come to an end.

It will come to an end for at least four reasons. First and foremost the surge in consumption is not sustainable, though for a somewhat dif-

ferent reason from previous booms. Then it was a combination of rising inflation and a balance of payments crisis. This time there is a bit of both, but it will be more because the main thing propelling the additional consumption is the windfall people have made from building society share sales. One City economist, David Mackie at JP Morgan, calculates that building society share sales next year will put £16bn into people's pockets. That is equivalent to 3.5 per cent of consumer spending. So if only half is spent and the rest saved, there would still be nearly another 2 per cent on spending, on top of whatever increase would have taken place anyway.

Second, there will be some rise in inflation and interest rates. Just this week the Bank of England's *Inflation Report* warns that, while in the short term inflation will continue to fall, unless policy is tightened at some stage it will rise in the next two years.

Unless interest rates are put up fairly

soon (it did not give a date, but most people reckon by the end of the year), they would have to rise more sharply at a later date. How much and when, of course, is guesswork, but you can work out what the City markets are guessing by looking at yields for various maturities of government debt. The answer there is that there will be little or no rise in interest rates until about May next year, but after that rates will rise steeply.

Third, fiscal policy will have to continue to be tightened: either taxes have to go up or spending will

have to come down. For all the increases in taxation that have taken place, for all the downward pressure on public spending, and even with a growing economy, the harsh fact remains that the Government keeps missing its targets for cutting the deficit. It is creeping down, but it is still nearly 5 per cent of GDP, far above the Maastricht guideline of 3 per cent, let alone the 2.25 per cent level needed to stabilise the national debt/GDP ratio. Don't blame the EU. Blame harsh economics: arguably the Maastricht target is far too loose.

So, far from there being much prospect of tax cuts over the next five years, whoever gets in will probably have to increase taxes yet again, or cut spending in a much more radical way than the Tories have contemplated to date, just as tour operators are loath to admit that the beaches are packed and the hotels crammed, neither of these options on fiscal policy is the sort of thing that

politicians like to put in their election brochures.

Fourth, the next government is not going to have the benefit to public finance that successive Tory governments have enjoyed: the bonus of privatisation receipts. Even now, with the whole programme winding down, privatisation has been worth £5bn or more a year. If they got back the Tories could scrape together a few more projects, like the Post Office and London Underground. It could raise a bit more by selling office blocks and other property. But basically the deal is done. There is simply not much left to sell, with the result that just to get back to the starting point a new government will be looking for another £5bn of taxation, or another £5bn of cuts.

Clearly if they do manage to scramble back they have to make sure they can hang on through the full five years in the hope that the voters can forget the glib two or three first ones – a tactic of which they have some experience.



HAMISH MACRAE

Can Clare hold down the best job in the world?

A new gaffe and her front-bench position is on the line. But Clare Short is already waxing egalitarian about overseas aid. Paul Vallely listens

Clare Short was doing her best. Thank goodness, she said as she escorted me from the lift to her Whitehall office, that this isn't going to be one of those "awkward-squad, foot-in-mouth" Short interviews. "I've had enough of those," she sighed, apparently oblivious of the fact that the one she had given to the *New Statesman* in the immediate aftermath of her demotion by Tony Blair was about to hit the streets.

We had met to discuss her new job – as Labour's front-bench spokesperson on overseas development – to which she was moved, despite coming third in the shadow cabinet elections, after what was seen as a gaffe-prone performance as shadow transport secretary.

But all that was behind her, she thought, when we met on Wednesday. "I'm not interested in talking about that," she said. "It's all done and dusted. I'm doing this overseas development job now."

Even as she spoke, the *New Statesman* was at the printers containing the interview she had given two weeks ago – the day after she was sacked from transport. In it she spoke of Tony Blair's backroom opposition to "the people of the dark" trying to turn the Labour leader from a "fresher, young, principled and decent" person into a "macho man". Their sinister strategy was to promote "new" Labour by acknowledging that old Labour was "appealing" and "unelectable". Such "dangerous" tactics, she said, could lead Labour to election defeat.

Oh dear. If overseas development was the Labour equivalent of the world's people don't have

alient of exile to Siberia, what salt mines might follow? Not that this was how Ms Short was now determined to view things.

"I never talked about it being a demotion," she insisted. "I was given a series of choices and I chose this. I didn't much like the way I came to it, but I'm honoured and delighted to take on this portfolio. There is no higher cause."

A gaffe-free answer. But she cannot stop there. "Every single person who cares about overseas development knows that in the British pecking order it is not high. It says a lot about Britain and the values of the political system and its political commentators."

So it is a demotion. No it is not.

Ms Short is determined to have it both ways

not. Ms Short is determined to have it both ways. It is the "best job in the world". And whatever the attitudes of the political establishment, it is a job that is dear to the hearts of the British public: "People have a natural generosity. When there's tragedy they want to help. But it can seem like unending pain, rushing around collecting money, and then a few years later there seems to be a famine somewhere else. But they have never had it put in front of them that there are serious steps to be taken that would start to eliminate the problem. If they knew they would all go for it."

People are fundamentally decent and they know it is morally disgusting that a quarter of the world's people don't have

for a few days so any answers I give are just the thoughts of an amateur," she warns at the outset. But asked what the primary purpose of aid is, she brushes aside the usual justifications about promoting British trade or reinforcing foreign policy and goes straight for the moral imperative.

"Aid should be about the elimination of poverty. What we need is an analysis of the values that lead to that inequality between the rich and the poor world, and which has led not to development but to *de-development* – with some countries actually getting poorer."

Over the past two decades the world has been through an era of market forces, deregulation, monetarism and trickle-down responsibility.

Ms Short is trying hard here to remain the model of cabinet responsibility.

Ask her about an increase in the aid budget and she produces without apology the Gordon Brown line about the aid budget growing as there is economic growth under a Labour government.

So that means Labour is no

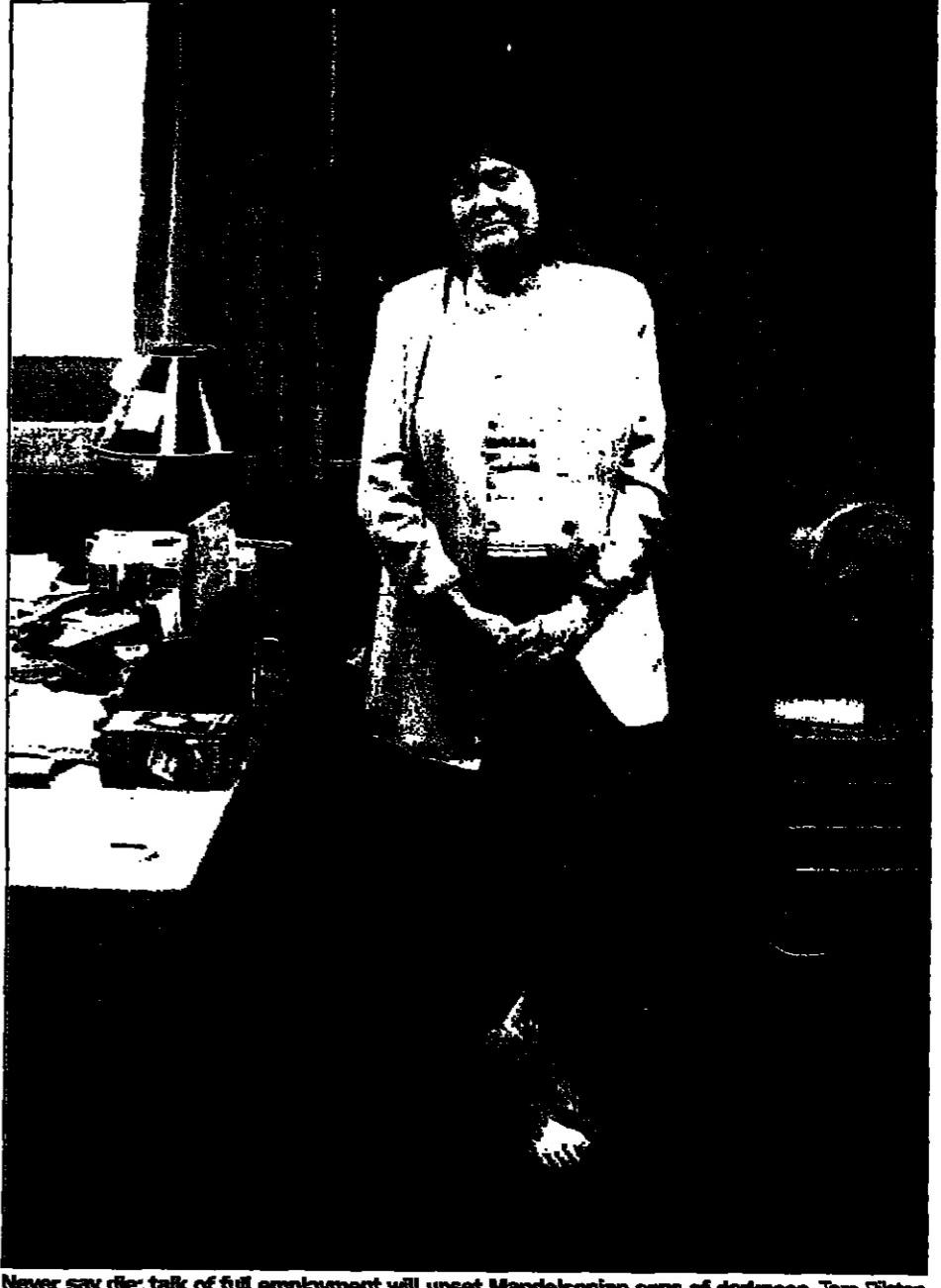
different from the Conservatives. Both are pledged, in theory, to move towards the UN target of spending 0.7 per cent of GDP on aid – but only as an isolated pious aspiration.

At this point she gets cross. "There are so many lies in this world. The Tories say that and yet they have cut, cut and cut again at the aid budget: Why maintain the pretence? Words must mean what they say, as Alice said. Lynda Chalker is a good minister but she is administering projects that run against the tide of the overall policies her government promotes."

"I'm fed up of hearing that we have a good bilateral aid programme when we don't make proper use of our seat on the board of the IMF or World Bank. We're not exactly a leading influence for reform. We just go along with the ugly values."

There are many in the development world who will be much heartened by her determination to push outside her own department for co-ordinated action, though her loose talk of global taxation – a tiny charge on the international markets – will have the spin doctors searching in their darkened rooms for the paracetamol.

If Labour did form a government, how seriously would Tony Blair take all this? Would Clare Short even make it into the Cabinet? The party has now fudged its earlier commitment to give her job that rank.



Never say die: talk of full employment will upset Mandelsonian sons of darkness Tom Pistor

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obituaries/gazette

Ossie Clark

Ossie Clark, dressmaker extraordinaire, was that rarest of breeds: a male fashion designer who understood, instinctively, the female anatomy. His cutting skills – legendary in fashion circles – were a consequence of his natural talent at translating the curves of a woman's body into cloth. His clothes were floaty, romantic, completely sexy, with plunging necklines, nipped-in waists and with a unique structure which was the result of freehand scissoring.

Clark was unfazed by dressing any kind of figure – even women who were on the verge of giving birth. "Comfort," he once said simply, "That is the most important thing".

Born into a large working class family in Oswaldtwistle (hence the nickname), at secondary school he was encouraged by his schoolmaster to study American fashion glossies instead of academic text books, and eventually his rise, via the Royal College of Art, to become one of the most significant and talented fashion designers of modern times.

His meeting (at Salford School of Art) and subsequent marriage to the textile designer Bernard Neville, who taught Celia at the Royal College. "They simply sparked each other off."

Always at the centre of social activity, even as a student, Clark became friends with his fellow students David Hockney and Patrick Proctor.

The Summer before his final collection at the Royal College of Art, Hockney and Clark drove across America, meeting Brian Epstein in a New York night club and returning with a roll of swirling black-and-white "op" fabric which was to become the centrepiece for his final collection.

He graduated in 1961 with a First, a double-page spread in *Vogue*, rapturous reviews and immediately joined forces with Alice Pollock who ran the ultra-

chic Quorum boutique on the King's Road. Clark had a design room above the shop, while Celia worked from home designing the textiles he used for his clothes. Quorum's customers became walking advertisements for Ossie Clark's ingenuity – amongst them, Bianca Jagger ("a wonderful bosom") and Patti Boyd, who he said "had ankles like glass". Clark and Pollock revelled in the social connections. Clark and Britwell were immortalised in the 1960s Hockney painting *Mr & Mrs Clark and Percy* – today one of the best-selling postcards in the Tate Gallery.

A long-running collaboration with the Rolling Stones was triggered off when Clark was introduced to Mick Jagger in Quorum. Jagger later visited his flat and danced energetically around while Clark sketched. Long before the popularisation of Lyra, he concocted the idea of jumpsuits for Jagger ("his road manager loved that," said Clark, "because you could just chuck them in the washing machine after each show").

Clark was at the heart of what has become known as the Swinging Sixties. His and Celia's shows were the precursors to the now familiar pairing of pop and fashion. A familiar sight at them were the Beatles in the front row with Patti Boyd, George Harrison's girlfriend, modelling.

As the Sixties and Seventies progressed the age-old fashion scenario – zero business sense mixed with blinkered creativity – marked the beginning of Clark's downfall. In 1975, Radley ready-to-wear attempted to translate Clark's designs from couture to mass production, and failed miserably. Years later he commented: "I just turned around, and everything was gone." Declared bankrupt in 1983, after divorce from Celia in 1975 and prolonged drug dependency Clark suffered a nervous breakdown from which he struggled, but never quite recovered. His two sons with Celia, Albert and George, were, he said, "the love of my life".

A comeback was tentatively attempted in the Eighties, using Marie Helvin and Jerry Hall on the catwalk, but it dissolved through lack of finance and press interest.

"He never found his Pierre

Berge," said the fashion writer Jane Mulfagh. "In many ways he is like Yves Saint Laurent in temperament, but lacked the emotional and financial backing."

Broken and disillusioned, in later years Clark was largely shunned by the fashion establishment (with the notable exception of the *Herald Tribune's* fashion editor Suzy Menkes who collected his clothes and made a point of introducing him to a party she held for Christian Lacroix).

Nonetheless, Clark continued to make dresses for special clients amongst them, Jose Fon-

ceca, a close friend and head of Models One.

Clark was a first in many ways: the first to analyse archive material and interpret it into fashion design (a practice now *de rigueur* for fashion students), the first to cross the line between fashion and rock, the first male designer really to understand what women want to wear.

He was responsible for the popularisation of the motorcycle jacket, hotpants, the maxi coat. Although known for his work with leather and snakeskin, his forte was his unique handling of romantic – and notoriously difficult – fabric such as crepe, satin, and silk chiffon.

At the turn of the Nineties, Clark's clothes were already

becoming collectors items with the Ossie/Celia collaborations the most sought-after.

Decades after his last collection, women who had tasted the Ossie Experience are still waxing lyrical. Above all, they associate his label with seduction. *Candida Lyett Green*, an Ossie Clark aficionado, once said: "In a Bill Gibb I would feel like the Odeon cinema, but in Ossie Clark, the reaction from men was just unbelievable."

Linda Watson

Raymond ("Ossie") Clark, fashion designer, born Oswaldtwistle, Lancashire 1942; married Celia Birrell (marriage dissolved 1975; two sons); died London 6 August 1996.

His guiding principle in constructing mathematical models for understanding macroeconomic fluctuations were circumscribed by the need to encapsulate the one most obvious stylised fact of the long-run development of advanced industrial economies. These economies experienced irregular fluctuations in economic activity, sometimes intolerably large, but never to the extent that the whole system collapsed – at least not in the "Keynesian era".

This seemed to imply, as Goodwin saw it, that the economic system was subject to what the natural scientist would call conservation laws, expressed in the constancy of "great ratios", during a period long enough to abstract away from institutional changes. The most significant of these great ratios, again as a stylised fact, was the share of national income going to the various factors of production, conventionally designated as capital, labour, natural resources etc.

He was literally trying to fashion an economic law of conservation, a law that had been perceived by Ricardo, passionately promulgated by Marx, and simply confirmed by Marx, but impossible to tame with the existing box of tools available to even the most advanced mathematical economists of the time. Chance intervened copiously in the ensuing saga which enabled this purist to train himself in the use of unusual mathematical tools to tackle and take important steps towards the solution of the problem of modelling endogenous economic fluctuations.

These tools, commonplace today – even among economists – in view of the almost banal popularity of chaos, dynamic complexity and catastrophe theory.

Yamada made several well-received serious films; he is as much his directorial skill as the sublime idiocy of Tora-san that make these comic movies so enchantingly watchable. I saw one last year in Paris, in a cinema full of hilarious Japanese of all ages. Now that Tora-san is no more, there will be less laughter in Japanese movie houses next New Year.

James Kirkup

Tadokoro Yasuo (Kiyoshi Atsumi), comedian, born Tokyo 10 March 1928; married Masako Tadokoro (one son, one daughter); died Tokyo 4 August 1996.

Some critics have accused of rather too sharp class-consciousness.

Yamada made several well-received serious films; he is as much his directorial skill as the sublime idiocy of Tora-san that make these comic movies so enchantingly watchable. I saw one last year in Paris, in a cinema full of hilarious Japanese of all ages. Now that Tora-san is no more, there will be less laughter in Japanese movie houses next New Year.

James Kirkup

John Simpson, Foreign Affairs Editor, BBC, 52; Professor Kevin Thompson, musician and Principal of Dartington College of Arts, 44; Dr David Vandyk Lindic, Vice-Chancellor, Bath University, 54; Sir Philip Beck, president, John Mowlem, 62; Mr Mervyn Bourdillon, Lord-Lieutenant of Powys, 72; The Right Rev Colin Buchanan, former Bishop of Aston, 62; Professor Elizabeth Cutler, botanist, 67; Mr Ian Dalzell MP, 64; Baroness Deagon, former teacher and journalist, 89; Captain Colin Farquharson of Whitehouse, Lord-Lieutenant of Aberdeenshire, 73; Miss Whitney Houston, singer, 33; Sir Alastair Huxley, Consul-General and Director-General of Trade, New York, 60; Sir Christopher Laidlaw, former chairman, Bridon, 74; Mr Rod Laver, tennis player, 58; Sir Frank Layfield QC, 75; Mr Robert Malpas, chairman, Cookson Group, 69; Mr James Naughtie, broadcaster, 45; Mr Wright, 1871; Reynaldo Hahn, composer, 1874; Albert William Ketelbey, composer, 1875; Léonide Fedorowitch Massine, dancer and choreographer, 1896; Jean Périer, child psychologist, 1896; René Clément, film director, 1918; Gile Stanier Cooper, playwright, 1918; Philip Arthur Larkin, poet, 1922; Deaths: Trajan, Roman emperor, 117; Maarten Harpertszoon Tromp, admiral, 1653; Captain Frederick Marryat, novelist, 1848; Dr John Hill Burton, historian and jurist, 1851; Sir Samuel Ferguson, poet, 1866; Ruggiero Leoncavallo, composer, 1919; Professor Graham Wallas, economist, 1932; Sir Julian Bernard Partridge, artist and cartoonist, 1945; Herman Hesse, poet and novelist, 1962; Joe Orton (John Kingsley Orton), playwright, 1967; Anton Walbrook (Adolf Wohlbrück), actor, 1967; Dmitri Dmitryevich Shostakovich, composer, 1975. On this day: the Battle of Adrano was fought between the Goths and the

Professor Richard Goodwin



Richard Goodwin was one of the great business cycle theorists of the post-Keynesian era. Almost single-handedly, he pioneered, developed and nurtured to maturity the economic and mathematical basis for what came to be called the *endogenous approach* to an analysis of macroeconomic fluctuations.

It is an approach that does not rely on external, non-economic forces in initiating and maintaining the business cycle. He sought the economic foundations for this vision of fluctuations in the works of the classical economists – Ricardo, in particular – in Marx, Schumpeter, Keynes and Hayek. In work of supreme technical virtuosity and aesthetic elegance, he framed his economic theories of fluctuations in the language of unusually powerful and deceptively simple mathematical tools.

Goodwin was born in Newcastle, Indiana and attended local schools before going to Harvard in 1930. He spent three years from 1934 as a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford and returned to Harvard where, from 1938 to 1950, he was a member of the Economics Department, but also taught Physics. Fleeing Harvard from the increasing difficulties of the "McCarthy era", and with the help of Richard Stone, then Director of the Department of Applied Economics, he found refuge at Cambridge.

He spent the next three decades at Cambridge, as a Fellow of Peterhouse and, finally, as Reader in Economic Theory in the Faculty of Economics and Politics. On retirement in 1980 he took up a Professorship in the Department of Economics at the ancient University of Siena, which enabled him to return in a formal way to his beloved Italy.

Although formal retirement in Siena came at the age of 75, he continued to teach there till very recently and was an active and interested participant of graduate seminars which were, appropriately, held in the Sala Goodwin which was tastefully adorned with some of his own paintings.

It is ironically, one of the great unwritten chapters of the development of modern applied mathematics that Goodwin's economically motivated use of, and contribution to, *non-linear dynamical systems theory* in connection with the above demonstration, was instrumental in partially resolving the 16th, one of the most obscure of the 23 "Mathematical Problems" posed by David Hilbert in 1900, as challenges to the mathematicians of the 20th century.

Goodwin contributed significantly to the fruitful forging of analytical links between the aggregate structure of Keynesian economics built on expenditure relations and the production-based edifice of Leontief's simplification of the standard Walrasian system. Here too he harnessed mathematical tools and results of unusual potential to develop economic frameworks of surprising flexibility and applicability, ranging from conventional national accounting analysis to intricate problems of planning growth paths for developing economies.

Richard Goodwin's lectures were works of art. The most intricate of economic propositions were explained with beautiful, freehand, geometric constructions on the blackboard, with mechanical constructions on the floor of the classroom (using, for example, the celebrated Phillips hydraulic machine, built to explain the flow of national income and expenditure) or, more recently, computer graphics. These innovative teaching methods, far ahead of their time, took even the novice to economic theory literally by the hand to its frontiers.

The student did not often realise that underlying these geometric, mechanical and computer devices and displays were the sophisticated mathematical theories associated with legendary mathematicians: Frobenius and Perron; Rayleigh and van der Pol; Pontryagin and Belyan. We felt, as students, that we were being introduced to the art of building economic models to understand the way the great theorists, from Ricardo and Marx to Schumpeter and Keynes, grappled with attempts to devise economic con-

cepts to tame the unruly stylised facts of industrial economies.

Little did we realise that we were being exposed to the arcane and untouchable art of pure research. But we were left in no doubt that here was a master who combined respect for the wisdom of the classics with an understanding of the contours of experience to temper the forging of tools to learn from them.

These three pillars, the wisdom of the classics, the contours of experience and the mastering of the use of tools, were the foundations on which legions of students from all corners of the world were encouraged to build their education as economists. It is therefore not surprising that one can count a Nobel laureate, Central Bank Directors, a distinguished Research Director of the World Bank, Cabinet ministers and plain, simple university professors and bread-and-butter economists in every walk of society among former students of Richard Goodwin.

He was, moreover, a painter of considerable talent and reputation. His paternal aunt, Helen Goodwin, was an impressionist painter of distinction, from whom as a young boy he first learned the rudiments of painting. Later, during the years as Rhodes Scholar, he also spent one year at the Ruskin Art School in Oxford. His paintings, reflecting perhaps his passion for the vividness of Tuscany and parts of North India, were notable for the dominant effect of colour and abstract, almost mathematical, form. They could, perhaps, be described as abstract expressionist paintings, although he would have resisted any such classification.

One of the greatest pleasures of his life, he once told me, was to have as students in his class on business cycle theory, in the Harvard of the late 1940s, two of the giants of the subject: Joseph Schumpeter and Gottfried Haberler. When the issue of his tenure came up, Schumpeter is reported to have told him that he could count on only two "sure votes": his own and that of Haberler, the two European émigrés, not known for being particularly liberal in their political beliefs, supporting the active, passionately left-wing academic out of a commitment to intellectual freedom. He was denied tenure.

Goodwin was a modest man with exquisite tastes and wide interests. He read German, French and Italian with great ease. He was a celebrated wine connoisseur, had a magnificent personal cellar, and also managed the cellars at Peterhouse with distinction for many years. (When I had successfully completed my doctoral dissertation under his supervision, at Cambridge in 1979, he presented me with a Chateau Leoville-Barton, 1949.) On the other hand, he had, as J.K. Galbraith poignantly noted, "a morbid lack of interest in the ordinary manifestations of material well-being".

He divided his last years between winters in India, summers in England, and springs and autumns in Italy. His years in Italy, after retirement from Cambridge in 1980, were perhaps the happiest ones. He was surrounded by the warmth of admiration, devotion of students and colleagues and, simply, the enchantment of Tuscany. It was fitting that death, when it came, found him in Siena.

He is survived by his wife of over half-a-century, Jackie.

K. Vela Velupillai

Richard Murphy Goodwin, economist, born Newcastle, Indiana 24 February 1913; Assistant Professor, Harvard University 1938-50; Assistant Lecturer, Lecturer and Reader in Economic Theory, Cambridge University and Fellow of Peterhouse 1950-69; Professor of Economic Theory and Professor of Economics (Emeritus), University of Siena 1969-96; married 1937 Jacqueline Wynne; died Siena, Italy 6 August 1996.

Longest-serving Director of the Peace Corps, she died Havana, Cuba 6 August, aged 62. Cuban Transport Minister since 1981.

Hord Hardin

lawyer and golfer, died Augusta, Georgia 5 August, aged 61. Member of the first ever England darts team.

Bill Leonard

darts player, died 6 August, aged 61. Member of the Masters golf tournament 1980-91.

James Kirkup

politician, died Bethesda, Maryland 6 August, aged 60. Chairman of the Masters golf tournament 1980-91.

Seneca Casas

politician, died Havana, Cuba 6 August, aged 62. Cuban Transport Minister since 1981.

Loret Ruppe

died Bethesda, Maryland 6 August, aged 60. Member of the first ever England darts team.

James Kirkup

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SPORTS

Plans for a force their way into the buffer zone through threats by the Greenpeace activists. The Greenpeace activists are ahead of a bid by Cyprus on Sunday to blockade the Cyprus

to vote in a return the West Army ruler Captain government in July after the parties agreed to prepare for war - Bangui

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about the future trade union was for Gdańsk to be ship building went 3,600 shipworkers, who will be part of a new P-Gdansk

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into the future. Now I think the world

I think the world

Industry view: Graduates get ahead on jobs front 19
Market report: Conglomerates generate a glow 18
Investment: Reed has nowhere to go but down 16

CITY & BUSINESS EDITOR: JEREMY WARNER

business¹⁵

THE INDEPENDENT • Friday 9 August 1996

BUSINESS NEWS DESK: tel 0171-293 2636 fax 0171-293 2098

SFO raid Hinchliffe mansion home

BY PAUL FARRELLY

Police raided the Sheffield headquarters of controversial entrepreneur Stephen Hinchliffe yesterday as the Serious Fraud Office announced a criminal investigation into the collapse two months ago of his Facia retail empire.

SFO officers and detectives from South Yorkshire police's commercial branch drove away a vanload of documents from Parkhead Hall, the sumptuous Sheffield mansion from which Mr Hinchliffe ran Facia and his extensive web of private companies that also form a key part of the police enquiry.

Four other addresses were searched, including Mr Hinchliffe's homes in Sheffield and London, and that of Christopher Harrison, Facia's finance director. Citing "operational reasons", the SFO and police declined to comment on the substance of the allegations.

Sources close to the case, however, said the investigation related to alleged theft of assets of millions of pounds from Facia and other matters linked to the running of the group.

Search warrants were executed today at five premises connected with Facia Limited in Sheffield and central London, "the SFO confirmed." The Serious Fraud Office together with South Yorkshire police have begun an investigation into Facia and related compa-

nies. No arrests have been made."

Mr Hinchliffe could not be contacted yesterday and was said by his office to be on holiday, thought to be in London. The SFO is urgently seeking the co-operation of both into the inquiry.

The day's dramatic events follow ten weeks of investigation by accountants KPMG into Facia's and Mr Hinchliffe's affairs.

The group, which included Sock Shop and the Salisbury's luggage chain, collapsed into receivership at the beginning of June, owing £30m to banks and suppliers.

The receivers have been investigating up to £10m of loans to Mr Hinchliffe's private companies and other expenses, including holidays and helicopter fees, charged to Facia.

They are also investigating the alleged disappearance of payments made to Facia by sellers of businesses to the group.

These are understood to include compensation for lease obligations - so-called "reverse premiums" - which allegedly never found their way to the group.

KPMG partner Tony Thompson, who is heading the receivership, declined to comment on the SFO move last night, but confirmed the bank had passed documents to the regulators.

"Liaison with the police, SFO and the Department of

United finds a friendly Refuge

NIC CIRUTTI

United Friendly and Refuge Assurance, two insurers competing in the dwindling home service market, yesterday decided to merge into a £1.46bn company with the loss of up to 1,800 jobs, a quarter of staff in both organisations.

The two companies are expected to take place in September, would lead to cost savings benefiting both shareholders and policyholders. The new organisation will be called United Assurance.

In a separate move, more than a million Refuge policyholders will share in a £10m windfall, paid because of the strength of the insurer's long-term business funds. The bonuses will be added to their value of their policies. Refuge said a 20-year endowment taken out in 1981, with a sum assured of £8,000, would be allocated an extra £763.

A further £430m surplus,

known as "orphan assets", has been identified as attributable to the company's shareholders. However, Refuge stressed the money would not be paid out immediately but would be used to finance group activities.

The merger highlights the long-running contractions being

suffered by the UK insurance industry, hit by rising costs and over-supply in an increasingly competitive market.

Both United Friendly and Refuge operate in the same area of the market, servicing mainly low-income clients, whose premiums are often col-

lected at their homes each month. United and Refuge sell mainly life assurance, but United has a general insurance arm providing building contents and household products. It quit the British motor market in May.

The combined organisation will have some 2.8million clients, with 25,500 under management.

George Mack, the new chief executive in the merged organisation, said: "We intend this merger to obtain significant economies of scale."

Of the merged organisation's 7,000 staff, about a quarter will lose their jobs. Some 100 offices will close, while United's head office in South London will transfer to Refuge's headquarters in Wimborne, Dorset.

Mr Mack said that no decisions had been made on which staff - at any level - would remain or leave the organisation. "We will make our decision purely on merit, without favouring either side," he said.

He added: "The action will be taken to ensure that the merged organisation is well placed to compete in the future."

Welcome aboard: John Cudworth (right) and George Mack, new chairman and chief executive. Photograph: Paul Bulley

Rank's review gets a cool reception

TOM STEVENSON

City Editor

Rank got a cool reception from the City yesterday for new chief executive Andrew Teare's strategic review of the leisure and entertainment group. Despite most of the details being well flagged over the last week or so, the shares closed 27p lower at 441p, a 6 per cent decline.

As expected, Rank signalled its intention to put its remaining 20 per cent stake in photocopier group Rank Xerox up for sale.

The holding is in the books at £930m although if Rank chooses to buy in the minority, as Rank hopes, it is expected to pay rather more for complete control.

In order to avoid a sizeable tax liability of maybe £200m, Rank will create a new holding company, Rank Group, to sit above two operating companies, Rank Organisation, which will continue to hold the Rank Xerox stake and is up for sale, and a grouping of all its other operations.

Mr Teare also spelled out

plans to raise £300m from the disposal of peripheral businesses, including its Shearings coach holiday arm. Speculation is growing that Rank plans to ditch the Pinewood film studios.

Rank plans to focus on four managed businesses - film, mainly duplication operations serving Hollywood studios; holidays, including Butlin's and Haven brands; UK recreation, where names include Odeon, Mecca and Top Rank; and Hard Rock, the themed restaurants group.

Mr Teare has also decided to maintain Rank's link with MCA, with whom the group is developing the Universal City theme park in Florida. It has also agreed in principle to take a stake in a Universal park in Osaka, Japan.

The interim results for the six months to June were heavily distorted by the profit last year on the sale of part of the Rank Xerox stake and the decision this year to book the dividend from that company rather than Rank's nominal share of its profits.

High street rakes in cash as UK goes on shopping spree

DIANE COYLE

Economics Editor

The nation went on a shopping spree last month, pointing to a continuing surge in high street spending according to the Confederation of British Industry. Its July distributive trades survey published today recorded the second-biggest increase in sales since the start of 1990, beaten only by June's increase.

The underlying rate of growth in sales volumes rose slightly between June and July. Retailers expect next month's increase to be the strongest since December 1988.

Alistair Eperon, chairman of the CBI's distributive trades survey panel, said: "As firms' expectations have been met over the past two months, their stronger expectations for August are even more encouraging."

The results, ahead of official figures for retail sales, add to the weight of evidence pointing to

a significant upturn in consumer spending.

The Bank of England this week cited buoyant business surveys as one of the reasons it thought interest rates would have to rise at some point, and preferably sooner rather than later. Four recent surveys of manufacturing have signalled that a recovery is also under way in industry.

The balance of retailers

reporting higher rather than lower sales was 43 per cent in July compared with 45 per cent in June and well up from the average of 30 per cent in the preceding three months. The expected balance for August climbed to 50 per cent.

A balance of 38 per cent said the volume of orders they placed with suppliers increased last month - well ahead of their earlier expectations. The

33 per cent expecting an increase in orders this month is the highest recorded for nearly eight years.

The only sectors not to report a July pick-up in sales compared with a year earlier were newsagents and off-licences. Grocers, clothes and shoe shops said they enjoyed a second successive month of strong growth.

The sectors linked to the housing market - furniture and carpets, DIY, china and household goods - said good sales growth continued, though at a substantially lower level for furniture and carpet retailers.

The survey also reported the second successive month of stronger-than-expected sales by motor traders. Orders placed with suppliers rose sharply in July and are expected to climb further in August. Wholesalers' volumes picked up after a slowdown in June.

The pound rose by more than a pence to DM23005 yesterday.

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**INSTRUMENTS
FOR PROFESSIONALS**

STOCK MARKETS		INTEREST RATES		CURRENCIES	
FTSE 100	Dow Jones	Short sterling	UK medium gilt	US dollar	
3611.40 +0.30 +0.0	3657.10 3632.30 4.10	7.79	8.00	7.91	8.08
FTSE 250	3418.60 +0.60 +0.2	4558.00 4015.30 3.97	6.51	6.81	5.98
FTSE 350	1907.00 +1.00 +0.1	1945.40 1816.50 3.13	3.07	-	-
FT Small Cap	2118.63 +4.36 +0.2	2244.36 1854.06 3.13	5.67	7.02	-
FT All Share	1884.43 +1.22 +0.1	1924.17 1791.95 3.91	-	-	-
New York	5685.75 -32.92 -0.6	5778.00 5632.94 2.20	-	-	-
Hong Kong	20731.31 +253.72 +1.2	22894.80 19734.70 0.74	-	-	-
Frankfurt	11164.36 +35.82 +0.3	11594.99 10204.87 3.45	-	-	-
	11164.36 +35.82 +0.3	11594.99 10204.87 3.45	-	-	-
	2538.15 +6.26 +0.2	2834.48 2253.36 1.81	-	-	-
	2538.15 +6.26 +0.2	2834.48 2253.36 1.81	-	-	-
	Source: FT Information				

MAIN PRICE CHANGES		OTHER INDICATORS	
Indices	Price (p) Change (%)	Funds	Price (p) Change (%)
FTSE 100	3611.40 +0.30 +0.0	Short sterling	441 27 5.8
FTSE 250	4318.60 +0.60 +0.2	UK medium gilt	216 13 5.7
FTSE 350	1907.00 +1.00 +0.1	US long bond	408 22 5.1
FT Small Cap	2118.63 +4.36 +0.2	Long bond	-
FT All Share	1884.43 +1.22 +0.1	Cap. Yrs	-
New York	5685.75 -32.92 -0.6	Gold	98.2 +0.1 91.3
Hong Kong	20731.31 +253.72 +1.2	Gold \$	19.78 +0.10 18.27
Frankfurt	11164.36 +35.82 +0.3	RPI	153.0 +2.1% 149.8 15 Aug
	11164.36 +35.82 +0.3	GDP	107.9 +0.4% 128.9 22 Aug
	2538.15 +6.26 +0.2	Base Rate	5.75pc
	2538.15 +6.26 +0.2	Yield	-

business

Reed has nowhere to go but down

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY TOM STEVENSON

Reed Elsevier is getting dangerously "boring" – good boring, of course, but dull none the less. How else to characterise yet another set of robust figures, with half-year underlying profits up 12 per cent and another faultless acquisition, in the form of legal publisher Tolley?

The market had been hoping for a big deal, with the names of Reuters, Bloomberg, even Pearson bandied about as takeover targets. In the event, £100m for United News & Media's Tolley, while certainly expensive, is small beer for a £600m company with net debt of a paltry £250m and interest covered a mere 19 times.

The City had become used to the company deriving its earnings growth in equal measure from acquisitions and continuing businesses. But since the decision to sell newspapers and consumer magazines, the trend has been toward relying on organic growth to push ahead. Yesterday's interim figures prove that Reed doesn't need to buy companies to keep up the momentum.

There were a few weak spots of course. The travel information business saw profits decline as the general market moved away from Reed's "hard copy" products and toward on-line services it has yet to develop fully. But management has started to tackle the problem, and expects to reverse the trend by next year, with the introduction of new electronic products.

On the whole, the main businesses showed sharp growth, with legal and other professional product lines leading the way. The excellent Lexis Nexis subsidiary – one of the best buys Reed ever made – is a clear market leader in the area of "must-have" information, for which customers are willing, indeed obliged, to pay a premium.

The Tolley acquisition in the UK complements the existing business group under Reed's Butterworth subsidiary. Where the former is strong on the so-called "first point of reference" end of the market, Butterworth dominates the specialist legal and tax sectors. The combination also allows Reed to market the Tolley products – tax guides, for example – to its existing business client base.

The problem is that Reed is performing so well there is really nowhere to go but down. It is a highly rated stock, with a strong – indeed near unassailable – position in its key markets of professional and business information. Those markets offer huge profit margins to the leaders, and come complete with high barriers to entry for any would-be competitor.

This year, the City expects profits of £810m, rising to perhaps £920m. At car-

rent year earnings of about 56p a share, the stock is on a multiple of 20 times – justifiable given the quality of earnings, and the consistency of returns, but the upside cannot be huge.

Dull outlook at Westminster

Westminster Healthcare's unsuccessful bid for rival nursing home operator Goldsborough last month put the City spotlight on a relatively neglected sector. The rationale of the offer was that after a boom period, nursing home operators have run into a tougher market as local authority healthcare budgets are squeezed. The new growth areas are home care services, where patients are treated at home, or other short-term care facilities where fee income is higher.

Westminster is trying to diversify into these new areas and the bid for Goldsborough would have provided a handy short-cut. The bid's failure cost £2.7m in fees which will appear as an excep-

tional item in next year's accounts. But the message Westminster was trying to get across yesterday is that the nursing home market is not the dead end some have portrayed.

Results for the year to May showed a 27 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £17.6m. The company says its occupancy rates have picked up again after a flu epidemic and that the market is due for a shake-out. Chief executive Pat Morton says the fears over the nursing home sector are overdone. He sees some capacity coming out and demand continuing to grow. He also feels the squeeze on local authority budgets will ease. This may be wishful thinking but Mr Morton points out that the sector grew by 7 per cent last year. Encouraging, but Westminster admits that its new homes are taking longer to fill than three years ago. With 500 new beds coming on to the market from Westminster alone this year, that is hardly going to ease the over-supply problem.

Westminster is trying to expand its non-nursing home activities. Fourteen per cent of group operating profits came from specialist services compared to just 2 per cent the year before. Next year

the company hopes to boost that figure to over 20 per cent. It has made some sound acquisitions in areas such as disabled housing though there is a dearth of quality companies for Westminster to snap up.

Westminster's shares have fallen sharply following the bid, though they closed 1p higher yesterday at 28p. On forecast profits of £22m they trade on a forward rating of 10. Unexciting.

McKechnie just keeps growing

McKechnie has shaken off the tag of Midlands metal-basher and looks in danger of acquiring a new image as an acquisitive little conglomerate. It has certainly been a busy year and yesterday's placing, acquisition and profits forecast capped a year in which it has already spent £70m in cash, a fair outlay compared with a market value of under £500m.

No surprise in those circumstances that the latest deal – the £15.25m acquisition of industrial fastener maker Dzus – is to be funded with new shares, or that the company should take the opportunity to raise another £23.5m for the next purchase, which apparently won't be long in coming.

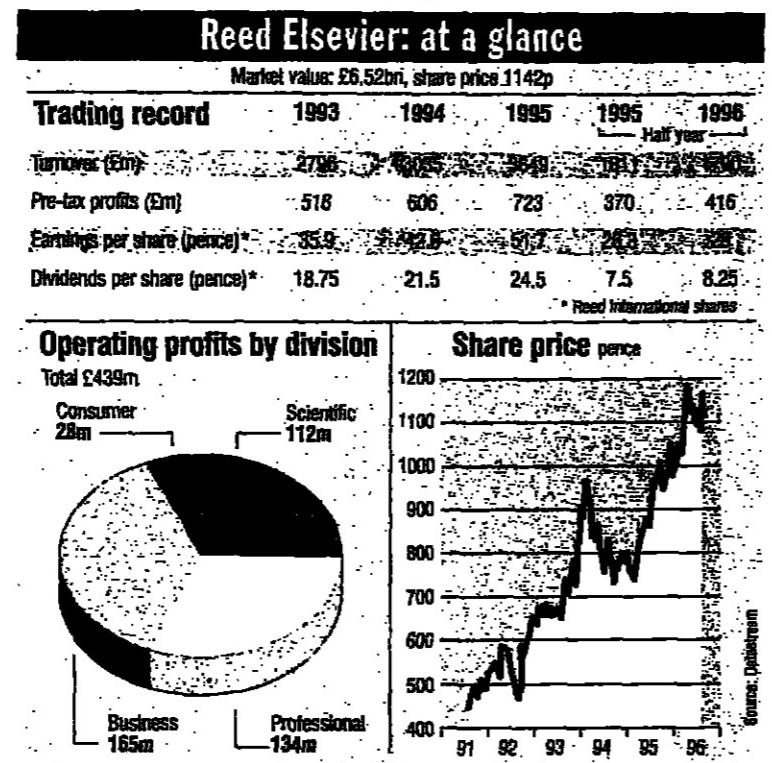
Dzus (pronounced 'Zeus') looks a good buy. Earnings-enhancing from day one, it occupies a nice little niche in the sort of heavy-duty clips that give quick and easy access in a whole range of applications – aircraft engines, the bit of carpet covering the tyre in your car boot, big computer installations. There is a good geographical spread to the business and a useful diversity of market sectors.

Investors seemed pretty relaxed about the deal and placing, adding 2p to the share price, which closed at 50p, 20p higher than the level at which the share issues are being pitched.

The fact that profits for the year to July just finished were confirmed at around market expectations of £49.5m helped.

McKechnie had a remarkably steady run over the past five years, growing earnings from 17p in 1991 to an estimated 37.5p for the year just ended. That is an attractive compound growth of over 15 per cent.

Compared with that rate of improvement, with more of the same to come according to forecasts, the shares trade on a relatively undemanding price/earnings ratio of 11. Don't expect any fireworks but this is a good share to tuck away.



Willis Corroon rejects calls for merger

NIC CICUTTI

Willis Corroon, one of the world's top six insurance brokers, yesterday turned its back on mergers with any of its main competitors as it announced a 6 per cent first-half rise in pre-tax profits to £70.6m.

The company said it would concentrate on growing in a number of chosen insurance market sectors around the world. It added that, where nec-

essary, it would go on the takeover trail itself if it felt that organic growth was not taking place fast enough.

John Reeve, executive chairman, said: "Notwithstanding considerable speculation as to the benefits of mergers between the big six global brokers, we have concluded after analysis of the issues that arguments in favour of such combinations are not compelling."

"In particular, cost economies

of scale from such mergers are not likely to be sufficient to confer significant competitive advantage."

However, a spokesman added that the position might change for Willis Corroon if others among the top six did come together.

Mr Reeve was speaking as Willis Corroon revealed a 2 per cent rise in brokerage and commission income of £365.2m in the first half of the year.

Mr Reeve said Willis Corroon had worked hard to add

Excluding £2.4m from disposals of non-core businesses, profits from the group's operations was 4 per cent higher.

Willis Corroon said that in the second quarter of this year profits from continuing operations reached £20.1m, excluding disposals, 16 per cent up on the same period last year. Brokerage and fee revenue rose 2 per cent to £165.8m.

Mr Reeve said the group had

carried out an internal review and a new organisational structure would be introduced later in the year.

business volume to compensate for the continuing reductions in premiums across all sectors.

Despite some signs of firmer rates in the marine sector, the company continues to predict falling or – at best – stable premiums in the period immediately ahead.

Mr Reeve said the group had

expected

Willis Corroon is backing Lloyd's of London's reconstruction and renewal programme and is pleased that it appears likely to be adopted. The group expects to pay a five-year annual levy on its business, with a £2.6m payment due later this year. Its member agency expects to make a one-off contribution of £2.5m.

Both payments will be covered by the release of litigation funds no longer needed.

COMPANY RESULTS

	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
Bailey College (F)	15.2m (14.1m)	0.50m (-0.00m)	1.4p (-2.5p)	0.25p (0.0p)
Break For The Border (F)	19.0m (11.0m)	1.1m (1.0m)	3.2p (3.2p)	1.05p (1.05p)
Burlington Group (F)	- (-)	0.07m (0.00m)	0.44p (0.35p)	n/- (-)
Centex Consulting (F)	19.8m (18.2m)	1.52m (0.72m)	1.5p (0.64p)	0.75p (0.5p)
Imperial (F)	- (-)	32.0m (25.8m)	1.7p (0.31p)	2p (1.75p)
Morgan Stanley (I)	113m (77.8m)	2.2m (1.28m)	5.3p (3.3p)	1.35p (0.85p)
Race* (F)	940m (854m)	12.8m (4.44m)	10.1p (4.29p)	5p (4.75p)
Reed Elsevier (F)	1.70m (1.718m)	417m (370m)	23p (23.3p)	8.25p (7.5p)
Unilever (F)	- (-)	3.4m (-0.78m)	6.0p (-3p)	1.5p (1.5p)
Westminster Healthcare (F)	88.1m (62.5m)	17.6m (13.8m)	23.3p (21.4p)	6p (5.4p)
Willis Corroon (F)	365m (352m)	70.6m (68.3m)	10.7p (9.7p)	1.55p (+)
Wylex (F)	85.0m (55.7m)	5.07m (1.88m)	1.8p (2.8p)	2.25p (1.25p)

(F) - Final (I) - Interim * Comparative figures pre-tax. † EPS and dividend is for Reed International

COMPLETE
UCAS
LISTINGS

BEWARE OF IMITATIONS

THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO OPPORTUNITIES FOR A-LEVEL STUDENTS

The Independent and the Independent on Sunday will be offering the complete official list of every single place available at universities and colleges throughout Britain. Of course, the other broadsheets will be publishing lists, but theirs offer only a limited selection.

Look out next Thursday for our free supplement designed to help you decide what to do next. Whether you are moving on to higher education, re-taking your A-levels or thinking of taking a year out, we will tell you everything you need to know about how to get ahead.

And starting on 19 August we will be featuring 11 more supplements, over 200 pages in total, listing all the vacancies available through clearing, provided to us by UCAS themselves.

You won't find the official UCAS listings in any other broadsheet newspaper.

INDEPENDENT
ON SUNDAY

THE INDEPENDENT

TV crews devise ways to collar Eddie George

CITY DIARY

JOHN WILLCOCK

Eddie George is well known among television economics reporters for hiding from the broadcast media whenever he is about to say something important.

The Governor of the Bank of England would prefer to address newspaper journalists when recommending that interest rates should go up, for instance, since the journalists' musings will only be read the next day.

Eddie's cover was blown this week when a TV crew from BSkyB turned up on the Governor's doorstep at home and prodded some comments from him about rates.

A rival, terrestrial broadcaster that shall remain nameless then complained bitterly to the Bank about missing out. The Bank's spokesman retorted: "Well, what do you want us to do? Put an electronic dog collar on him? We can't control him, you know."

Tell the Governor. This is the way forward.

The Bank of England also has a spanking new suite of conference rooms – underground. A Bank spokesman welcomed journalists to it this week with the words: "Welcome to our new subterranean home."

It would be nice to say that the rooms previously formed a part of the bank's gold vaults, or at least a James Bond-style nuclear bunker, but the truth is more prosaic – they were used to store furniture.

"You can't tunnel through the conference room walls to a sea of gold," the spokesman adds reassuringly.

Which is just as well, since the vast majority of the UK's gold reserves, totalling \$5.2bn, are stored in the Bank. So how deep do the vaults go? "A long way," says the spokesman.

Now Larry Weinbach, chief executive of Andersen Worldwide, the umbrella

organisation for the two sides, has junked a simple demerger. In its place the firm will split into a number of small "market focused" units. The proposal is to be unveiled to partners at their annual meeting next month.

Sceptics my question why you would go to all the bother of building the only truly global accountancy firm and then, when you had achieved this ultimate goal, promptly go and split it up again.

These guys charge an arm and a leg telling companies how to run themselves. Perhaps Andersen needs some help of its own.

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COMMENT

The fatal error was made right at the start. The sponsors and the company were guilty of being too greedy by putting a price in the window that encouraged institutional shoppers to walk on by.

Somerfield fiasco leaves egg on Kleinwort's face

The spectacle of Kleinwort Benson forlornly wheeling the Somerfield orphan around the company's supermarket rivals in the vain hope that a trade sale might extract a higher price than a flotation rather puts the cap on one of the more humiliating new issues of recent years.

What makes it odder still is that the desparate ring-round of Tesco, Sainsbury's and Co took place long after Kleinwort and Somerfield had cut the offer price for a second time and finally got it underwritten. As sponsor of the issue, Kleinwort was clearly under a duty to maximise proceeds for the vendors. It also needed to protect its back against litigation should any of the debt-holders in Isosceles, Somerfield's parent company, claim that the business had been sold too cheaply and reach for their lawyers.

The fatal error, however, was made not at the close of the offer but right at the start. The sponsors and the company were guilty of being too greedy by putting a price in the window that encouraged institutional shoppers to walk on by.

When the inevitable happened and the price was cut for the first time, Kleinwort was on the run and the institutions knew it. Against a backdrop of volatile markets and desperation to get the offer away, all they had to do was sit back and wait for the price to be cut again. And so it was.

Kleinwort justified whittling down the price from 180-190p to 145p by citing the state of the markets. The excuse is only

partly borne out by reality. Between the setting of the indicative price and the final price the FTSE 100 index fell 1.7 per cent - hardly enough to justify a 22 per cent cut in the offer price.

Few players emerge from this débâcle unscathed. David Simons and his fellow directors saw their "beats robbing the bank" bonuses cut back; private investors were treated shabbily by not being allowed to buy more shares at the cheaper price, and Somerfield's banks ended up writing off more debt than they wanted to.

But Kleinwort comes out worst. What with the flop of the British Biotech rights issue, where it was also the sponsor, and the disaster of its European privatisation trust, Kepif, Kleinwort is plainly going through something of a bad patch.

Simon Robertson, Kleinwort's chairman, can only hope and pray that Somerfield does not add still further to its woes by rocketing to an embarrassing premium when the shares start trading today.

Door-to-door insurance deal makes sense

For both shareholders and policyholders of Refuge and United Friendly, yesterday's merger looks like a win-win deal. It was also, perhaps, an inevitable one, even among the C1 and D social classes from which the two companies draw most of their

customers, life assurance has become a distinctly unfashionable thing. As a consequence, the pressure for consolidation and cost-cutting is on the never before.

Over the next couple of years the combined company plans to cut its workforce by about 25 per cent. Most of the benefit of that will go to policyholders. But there will be a lot left for shareholders too. Add that to the immediate benefits of the release of orphan assets and the effect of the merger will be to lift dividends by 35 per cent for Refuge shareholders and more than 50 per cent for investors in United Friendly. As the cost cuts begin to flow through, there will be more to follow.

The economies of scale to be had by merging in this sector of the market - which involves door-to-door collection of premiums, often in cash - are plainly substantial, but the same sort of logic applies throughout the life assurance industry. There are too many life assurance companies, supporting too many sales teams, chasing too small a market. Despite this, some of the drier predictions made a couple of years back at the time of commission disclosure - that the number of life insurers would halve by the end of the century through mergers and closures - are not coming to pass.

Many of the mutuals are digging in their heels and refusing to contemplate either takeover or merger. In the interests of consumer choice and competition, this is perhaps a good thing. If the deals that are creeping

through live up to expectations, however, the refuseniks may be forced to rethink their position. The smaller player is going to have to be something quite exceptional to survive in the intensely competitive market place that promises to develop.

Focusing on leisure is risky for Rank

Putting £50,000 into what was then the new business of photocopiers in the 1950s stands out as one of the greatest corporate investments of all time. On the basis of Rank's conservative £930m book valuation of its remaining interest in Rank Xerox, that initial punt on an interesting new technology is today worth the best part of £5bn.

Getting rid of the rump stake makes good sense both strategically and financially, but focusing on Rank's leisure and entertainment core makes the company considerably riskier. Not least because if you add in the £300m proceeds of other planned disposals, the new chief executive, Andrew Teare, has a worryingly fat chequebook to go with his understandably sketchy knowledge of the leisure business.

If he spends that money wisely, Rank could return to the top table of the British leisure industry from which it has been notably absent for years. But no one should underestimate the challenge, given the uninspiring springboard the rest of the group provides

Best of the bunch is probably film duplication, and if Hollywood continues to churn out films like *Independence Day* and *Mission Impossible*, Rank will have no problem shipping at least the current million or so videos a day. The digital revolution means the video tape's day is numbered however, and this is probably a case of making hay while the sun shines.

Elsewhere Rank is like a snapshot of 1960s Britain, with a stable of squandered, under-invested and tired brands. Odeon, Butlin's, Top Rank, Mecca - it's hardly the starting point of choice for a man setting out to rebuild a leisure giant.

Hard Rock appears to have become the focus of Rank's attentions. Again buying in franchise operations and working the brand hard with spin-offs such as branded music venues and a record label make sense, but this is a 25-year-old brand where like-for-like sales in the first half were actually lower than in 1995.

It would be churlish to judge Andrew Teare after just three months in the job. But the honeymoon period is certainly over, as the 6 per cent fall in his share price yesterday amply demonstrated. Leisure and going out are destined to remain very high growth areas of consumer spending but finding the formula that attracts the punters remains as hard as ever. Mr Teare might do better to return the Rank Xerox cash direct to shareholders than to embark on a reckless spending spree.

Reed pays £100m for legal publisher

MATHEW HORSMAN
Media Editor

and that the US was likely to be the key target. However, organic growth would provide earnings momentum without more deals.

The results in the year to 30 June were roughly in line with expectations, with the scientific, professional and business operations all posting higher operating profits. All told, pretax profits rose 12 per cent to £416m, on revenues down 6 per cent to £1.7bn. The professional division, which groups Reed Legal and Lexis-Nexis, was particularly strong, with operating profits ahead 19 per cent and margins rising by 2.4 per cent.

The travel division turned in a disappointing half, largely due to the decline in the market for Reed's traditional paper-based information. The company said it was accelerating efforts to introduce new electronic data products.

The rump of the consumer division, much of which has

been sold off as part of a corporate restructuring announced last year, posted lower growth of about 8 per cent. Consumer books, which the company failed to sell at an acceptable price in an auction earlier this year, was "patchy" Mr Mellon conceded. "We intend to hold on to the company, turn it around, and sell it at a higher price when possible," he added.

The Tolley acquisition was a "perfect fit," Mark Arnott, chief financial officer, said. "Their products complement those we already have, and will give us a good position in the market for legal and regulatory information for business."

The company had profits of £4m last year, on revenues of £17m. Analysts said the price, about 25 times operating profits, was very high, but conceded Reed could benefit from running it alongside Butterworth, its existing tax and legal specialist publishing operation.



John Mellon: well placed to finance further deals

Now it's a black hole in cyberspace from AOL

PATRICK TOOHER

It was the hi-tech equivalent of the lights going out all over the world. It was the day AOL went AWOL.

America Online, the world's leading on-line computer service, was finally switched back on yesterday after the biggest black-out in cyberspace left more than 6 million customers world-wide without access to their e-mail and favourite Web sites for almost 19 hours.

The on-line service crashed while new host software essential to operating the system was being installed on Wednesday morning. Normal service was only resumed in the early hours of Thursday.

The shutdown left customers ranging from newspapers such as the *Chicago Tribune* and the *New York Times* to small businesses and home-office workers staring at blank screens.

In Britain, subscribers missed hearing the seductive tones of actress Joanna Lumley greet

them with "Hello" when they logged on and "Goodbye" when they logged off.

Members will be credited for a lost day of service, Steve Case, AOL chairman and chief operating officer, said.

Jonathan Bulkeley, managing director of America Online in the UK, was contrite. "Since I've been at AOL, this is the worst disaster I've seen," he said in an emotional e-mail to subscribers.

"I remember a flood we had a few years ago where the operations people had to run out and buy aqua-Hoovers to slurp up all the water in the computer room (six hours of downtime),

the systems installation that went sour (eight hours of downtime) and the transatlantic cables that were turned off for maintenance (seven hours downtime), but I can't remember a day like today."

He added: "I hope this will be the AOL disaster which becomes legendary - the day AOL went dark, the outage of '96, a distant memory."

Black-outs are becoming more common on the Internet and on-line services, reflecting the reliability problems that plague computer networks as they become more popular.

In recent months rival on-line services, including that of software giant Microsoft, have been disrupted by serious computer glitches.

The outage came at a sensitive time for AOL, hours before it reported fourth-quarter earnings. The company has already been hit by competition from the Internet, which has caused it to lower subscription fees. At the same time growth in subscriber numbers has slowed. Unhappy customers are the last things it needs.

With that in mind, a weary Mr Bulkeley signed off to his subscribers: "It's now 4:36 am on August 8th and I am going to sleep. Suffice it to say that we do not take this lightly. We do and will do everything possible to keep this from ever happening again."

Competition laws to get teeth

MICHAEL HARRISON

Companies found guilty of operating cartels or abusing their market power could be fined up to 10 per cent of turnover under a draft Bill to reform British competition law published yesterday by the Government.

The overhaul of existing laws would also give the Office of Fair Trading powers to raid company premises in search of incriminating evidence of cartels or anti-competitive agreements.

The European Commission's competition directorate has had such powers for a long time.

Until now British competition authorities had been pressing for similar rights but to no avail.

However, the draft Bill unveiled yesterday has yet to be laid before Parliament and some observers believe that is unlikely to happen before the next election.

Publication of the Tackling Cartels and the Abuse of Market Power draft Bill, the Chairman of the Board of Trade, Ian Lang, would only say he would lay it before Parliament "when the legislative programme permits."

The reform of the law would

replace the Restrictive Trade Practices Act, widely seen as too cumbersome and prescriptive, with a general prohibition of cartels, anti-competitive agreements and concerted parties.

It would also strengthen the powers of the Director General of Fair Trading, John Bridge, to tackle abuses of market power under the Fair Trading Act 1973 and the Competition Act 1980.

However, a DTI spokesman said that the proposed law would have no impact on the right of appeal under law that British Telecom is seeking against rulings that the Ofcom did.

IN BRIEF

- Nynex CableComms, the UK's second-largest cable operator, posted losses of £41.5m in the six months to 30 June, compared with a loss of £57.4m last time, on turnover doubled to £2.9m. John Kilian, chief executive, said that revenues per line, as well as the overall subscriber base, had improved markedly and the company would be in positive operating cash flow "in the near future". He confirmed that Nynex was in talks with potential partners to launch a local television channel in Greater Manchester. The *Independent* reported yesterday that Granada, Nynex and the *Manchester Evening News* were in talks to set up a channel featuring non-match coverage of Manchester United football club.

- Complaints against regional electricity companies, compensation payments and disconnections fell sharply last year, according to the latest customer services report from the industry regulator, Professor Stephen Littlechild. Complaints were down by 22 per cent to 7,584 while payments by RECs for failing to meet standards fell from 5,410 to 3,795. There was also a fall of almost 38 per cent in disconnections for bad debt with none in the London or Seaboard areas. Failure to meet standards rose from 364 to 601 at Swale, now owned by Welsh Water through the holding company Hyder.

- Glaxo Wellcome has won approval from the European Commission to market the anti-HIV treatment Epirvir in the 15 EU member states. Epirvir, licensed in other markets as 3TC, is indicated for use as part of a "drugs cocktail" for the treatment of both adults and teenage children. Glaxo said the new drug will be launched in each EU member state as soon as possible, following price negotiations with national health authorities.

- Northern Ireland will gain more than 110 new jobs due to expansion by two engineering companies in Belfast. Mackie International is to build a new factory at its Springfield foundry site while Thirlane Scott, a subsidiary of Denmark's Thirlane-Titan, is expanding its existing plant. Baroness Denton, Northern Ireland economy minister, said investments totalling more than £240m promised at least 2,600 new jobs during the next six years.

- Nokia, the Finnish electronics group, announced a 56 per cent drop in second-quarter profits to 728m markka (£106m), compared with 1.67bn markka over the same period last year. Although the mobile phones business showed a "slight operating profit" after a loss-making first quarter, the level was still "significantly lower" than the same period in 1995.

NatWest severs Spanish link with £123m sale

NIC CICUTI

National Westminster Bank yesterday brought to a formal close its independent presence in the Spanish retail banking market when it sold 80 per cent of Banco NatWest Espana to Banco Sabadell for £123m.

The UK bank still has an option to sell the rest of the business to Banco Sabadell between 1999 and 2001 at a minimum price of £31m.

Banking analysts said a sell-off of NatWest's remaining holding was likely to take place at the earliest possible date.

NatWest said its investment banking arm, NatWest Markets, would continue to strengthen its presence and activities in Spain, while its private bank Coutts would provide cross-border banking services to Spanish residents.

The sale price is 1.3 times above net asset value. After the reinstatement of £50m in good will previously written off by NatWest, the sale of the Spanish operation will show a loss of about £25m.

Banco Sabadell and its regional subsidiary in the Asturias region will merge Banco NatWest's operation with its own to create 600 branches throughout Spain.



Heinz Record Year for Heinz

I am pleased to report that H.J. Heinz Company achieved record earnings in Fiscal 1996. Global sales reached US\$9.1 billion for the year, more than US\$1 billion higher than the record set last year. Earnings per share progressed in kind, increasing 10% to US\$.75 from US\$.59. Operating income increased 11% from US\$.16 billion to US\$.19 billion. Heinz continues to be attractive to investors seeking consistent, double-digit earnings growth. Over the past two years, Heinz's stock price appreciated 52% during a period that saw a major secondary stock offering of nearly 21.8 million shares, a three-for-two stock split and two dividend increases. The total return over that period for Heinz shareholders who reinvested their dividends was 67%, or more than 29% compounded annually.

Looking ahead, Heinz has excellent growth opportunities in six core categories where we are driving for global leadership. These categories are: foodservice; infant foods; retail ketchup and condiments; petfood; tune; and weight control.

What distinguished these categories is that they are all very large; they are all growing globally; and, more importantly, they are all businesses in which Heinz enjoys leading brand positions and unique resources. We should also note that 26 of our brands will, this year, record sales of US\$100 million or more. Five additional brands are on the US\$100 million threshold. In summary, our growth plan is clear and achievable. We will continue to strengthen worldwide leadership and leverage in our six core categories. We will consolidate our acquisitions, relentlessly cut costs and attain higher standards in production efficiency. We will continue to grow overseas, with particular emphasis on emerging markets.

Sales	USS9.11 billion
Net Income Before Tax	USS1.02 billion
Net Income	USS659 million

As I told security analysts last March, Heinz management possess unique skills in marketing, operations and finance and in the mysterious art of making profits, and we are fortunate to be backed by the dedication of our 43,300 co-workers worldwide. Together, we are committed to achieving double-digit growth in Fiscal 1997 and to attaining and expanding world leadership in our six core categories.

Dr. A.J.F. O'Reilly

The above is extracted from the statement to shareholders of H.J. Heinz Company by the Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer, Dr. A.J.F. O'Reilly, for the year to 31 May, 1996. The contents of this advertisement for which the Directors of H.J. Heinz Company accept responsibility have been approved for the purposes of Section 57 of the Financial Services Act 1986 by Chapter 3 of the Financial Services Authority.

THE INDEPENDENT

INDEPENDENT
ON SUNDAY

PHILIPS
Let's make things better

Play INDEPENDENT FANTASY FOOTBALL

You've seen the rest now play the best in The Independent and the Independent on Sunday. Independent Fantasy Football, supported by Philips Energy Saver Light Bulbs, brings you the first real innovation in fantasy football allowing you to pick the playing formation of your team. You can opt for a defensive strategy with five defenders, three midfielders and two strikers in a 5-3-2 formation, or go on the attack with three strikers in a 4-3-3 line-up. Complete your team with a goalkeeper and a Premiership manager and you'll be ready for kick-off. To put your title-winning team together you have a budget of £40 million to spend. It is up to you how you spend the money, with no restrictions on the number of players you can choose from any one Premiership team. Look carefully and you will find some real bargains, with Alan Shearer on sale for the princely price of £11.1 million!

So take up the challenge and prove your skill as a manager to win a football fan's dream prize and the opportunity to gloat over friends and colleagues well into the 1997-98 season.

PRIZES

The overall winner at the end of the season will be the entrant who has accrued more points than any other Independent Fantasy Football team in that time. Win the ultimate prize - a trip to the 1998 World Cup in France. The winner, plus companion, will see all the action of a quarter-final and a semi-final of their choice, plus the final. In addition, the highest scoring team each month will win a pair of tickets to one of England's World Cup qualifying games at Wembley.

HOW TO ENTER

Using your football knowledge decide your team formation from the following four options:

FORMATION A. 4-4-2

4 Defenders, 4 Midfielders, 2 Strikers

FORMATION B. 4-3-3

4 Defenders, 3 Midfielders, 3 Strikers

FORMATION C. 5-3-2

5 Defenders, 3 Midfielders, 2 Strikers

FORMATION D. 3-5-2

3 Defenders, 5 Midfielders, 2 Strikers

You are free to enter as many teams as you wish, allowing you to try out more than one tactical formation, but each team must be made as a separate entry via a separate telephone call.

Once you have chosen your formation, select your team of 10 players to fit your chosen option, plus one goalkeeper and



one manager from the list below. Players can only play in the positions that they are listed under and the team's total value must not exceed £40 million. Remember to give your team a name.

Use our Team Selection form above right, to make a note of your team's details, then dial our registration hotline to register. Where possible, please try to use a tone telephone, although a traditional pulse telephone can be used if necessary. Make sure you follow the instructions on the phoneline carefully. At the end of your call you will be given your own special PIN number, which you must keep safe. It can be added to your Team Selection form.

HOW TO SCORE

Every time one of your players scores a goal you will be awarded four points. Four points will also be awarded for goalkeepers and defenders whose team have kept a clean sheet during a match.

If a player scores the winning goal, i.e. if there is a one-goal difference in the scoreline, the player scoring the final goal for the winning team is awarded one bonus point in addition to the stan-

dard four points awarded for that goal. Each successful assist (a pass that, in the opinion of our team of experts, leads directly to a goal) will give a player three points. The opinion of our experts on this matter is final. Each player selected and starting a game will be awarded one point.

Players lose one point for a yellow card and three for a red card. Own goals, either scored or conceded, do not count for scoring purposes.

The Premiership manager that you choose will be awarded three points if their real-life team win, one point if they draw and no points if they lose.

Results will be published in The Independent every Wednesday for all games played from the previous Monday to Sunday inclusive. They will also appear the following Sunday, in the Independent on Sunday.

Look out for transfer opportunities which will be announced during the season. Please read the Rules and Conditions carefully before making your call.

Team Selection Form

Name	Code	Value (£m)
Goalkeeper		
Defender 1		
Defender 2		
Defender 3		
Defender 4		
Defender 5		
Midfielder 1		
Midfielder 2		
Midfielder 3		
Midfielder 4		
Midfielder 5		
Striker 1		
Striker 2		
Striker 3		
Manager		
PIN No. []	Total £	

Team Name:

POINT SCORES:

4 points for a goal ■ 4 points for a goalkeeper/defender clean sheet ■ 3 points for a successful assist ■ 1 point when a player is selected and plays ■ 1 point for a winning goal ■ 3 points for a manager win. 1 point for a draw ■ Lose 1 point for a yellow card ■ Lose 3 points for a red card

Register today, call:

UK 0891-252-244 (tone)

UK 0891-252-234 (pulse)

Republic of Ireland: 1550 131 553

UK calls cost 39p per minute cheap rate and 49p at all other times. Republic of Ireland calls cost 59p per minute including VAT at all times. Maximum call length 6.5 minutes.

INDEPENDENT TEAM MARKET

CODE	PLAYER	TEAM	VALUE (£m)	CODE	PLAYER	TEAM	VALUE (£m)	CODE	PLAYER	TEAM	VALUE (£m)	CODE	PLAYER	TEAM	VALUE (£m)
GOALKEEPERS															
300	Seaman	ARS	5.9	457	Watson	EVE	2.7	550	Pearce	WIM	2.2	685	Ginola	NEW	4.2
303	Bosnich	AV	4.0	458	Unsworth	EVE	3.0	553	Reeves	WIM	1.8	686	Clark	NEW	3.0
304	Flowers	BLA	5.2	459	Hoffitter	EVE	2.2	554	Thorn	WIM	1.8	687	Wooz	NOT	3.4
305	Kharine	CHE	3.7	460	Jobson	LEE	2.7	555	Thatcher	WIM	2.7	688	Bart-Williams	NOT	3.6
306	Hitchcock	CHE	1.5	461	Wetherall	LEE	3.6					689	Stone	NOT	5.0
307	Ogrizovic	COV	2.2	462	Dorigo	LEE	3.5					690	Gemmill	NOT	3.0
308	Filan	COV	1.5	463	Pemberton	LEE	3.2	600	Merson	ARS	4.4	691	Parker	LEI	2.5
309	Souther	EVE	3.0	464	Walsh	LEI	1.2	603	Platt	ARS	4.8	692	Waddle	SW	2.7
310	Martyn	LEE	3.3	465	Grayson	LEI	2.2	604	Parfour	ARS	2.4	693	Blinker	SW	2.2
311	James	LIV	4.7	466	Whitlow	LEI	1.2	605	Helder	ARS	3.7	694	Jones	SW	2.0
312	Pool	LEI	1.5	467	Watts	LEI	1.6	606	Hiller	ARS	1.5	695	Hyde	SW	1.8
313	Hoult	DER	1.6	468	Babb	LIV	3.7	607	Taylor	AV	1.9	696	Magilton	SOT	2.4
314	Schmeichel	MU	5.5	469	Jones	LIV	2.7	608	Donaldson	AV	3.1	697	Venison	SOT	2.1
315	Crossley	NOT	2.7	470	Wright	LIV	2.8	609	Drayton	AV	4.1	698	Heaney	SOT	2.0
316	Wright	NOT	1.3	471	Ruddock	LIV	3.0	610	Davies	BLA	3.0	699	McGarry	SOT	2.7
317	Beasant	SOT	1.8	472	Scales	LIV	4.4	611	McMahon	BLA	3.7	700	Rae	SOT	4.8
318	Pressman	SW	2.7	473	Harkness	LIV	2.2	612	Shawcross	BLA	3.4	701	Kenew	SOT	3.1
319	Coton	SOT	1.8	474	Neville	BLA	3.7	613	Sparks	BLA	3.0	702	Anderson	SOT	5.5
320	Walker	SOT	3.4	475	Irwin	BLA	3.7	614	Emerson	BLA	3.0	703	Howells	SOT	5.6
321	Miklosko	WH	3.0	476	Pallister	BLA	4.9	615	Di Matteo	CHE	4.4	704	Sinton	TOT	3.0
322	Sullivan	WIM	1.8	477	May	BLA	3.0	616	Wise	CHE	3.7	705	Williamson	WH	3.6
323	Dixon	ARS	3.1	478	Vickers	BLA	2.2	617	Newton	CHE	2.4	706	Dumitrescu	SOT	2.7
324	Winterburn	ARS	3.1	479	Pearson	BLA	2.2	618	Parrock	CHE	2.1	707	Hughes	WH	2.7
325	Bould	ARS	3.0	480	Whyte	BLA	2.2	619	McAllister	CHE	2.4	708	Moscar	WH	2.7
326	Keown	ARS	5.5	481	Cooper	NOT	4.1	620	Richardson	CHE	2.4	709	McNamee	WH	2.1
327	Staunton	AV	5.2	482	Chetton	NOT	4.1	621	Jess	CHE	2.2	710	McAuley	WH	2.1
328	Southgate	AV	5.2	483	Lytle	NOT	4.1	622	Simpson	CHE	2.2	711	Archie	WH	2.1
329	McGinlay	AV	3.0	484	Porte	NOT	4.1	623	Van Der Laan	DER	2.2	712	Edwards	WIM	2.0
330	Ehiogu	AV	3.0	485	Monkou	SOT	2.2	624	Elliott	DER	1.6	713	Wilson	WIM	2.0
331	Wright	AV	5.0	486	Dodd	SOT	2.2	625	Kanchelskis	DER	1.6	714	Miller	AV	4.4
332	Tiler	AV	1.2	487	Benali	SOT	2.2	626	Palmer	DER	1.6	715	Johnson	AV	3.5
333	Berg	BLA	3.4	488	Charlton	SOT	2.2	627	Barnes	BLA	3.0	716	Joachim	AV	2.4
334	Le Saux	BLA	4.0	489	Nolan	SW	1.9	628	Redknapp	BLA	5.2	717	Shearer	NEW	11.1
335	Coleman	BLA	3.7	490	Atherton	SW	1.9	629	McManaman						

Three of Shally's horses 'poisoned'

Racing

GREG WOOD

It is now three weeks since Richard Davis was killed by a fall from the chaser Mr Sox at Southwell, but the events and rumours following his death continue to take twist after bizarre twist. Three horses have now died at the stables of Laura Shally, Mr Sox's trainer, since Davis's death on 19 July. And, though Derbyshire police can offer no definite comment until toxicology tests are completed, Shally's vet is convinced that all three were poisoned.

Robin Kernohan, who has treated Shally's horses for six months, said that the horses had suffered a "sickening" death and stated that he believed poison had been put in their drinking water. "The horses' throats are paralysed, they have muscle tremors, sweating and show classic-like tendencies," Kernohan said. "They then go into a coma and die." Mr Sox would have become a fourth victim, but the horse-drinker supplying him was faulty.

The first time that every race at a meeting has been re-opened, with only 29 horses put forward for the six races. The last four hurdle entries attracted just four entries each.

The ground at Southwell was criticised last month when the official going was changed to

firm after the second race, contrary to assurances that the going would be no faster than good to firm throughout the summer jumps campaign.

While investigations continued into the deaths at Shally's yard, it was also revealed yesterday that a former racehorse, Fisherman's Quay, was attacked with "an axe or machete" last week in the field near Dunbar, East Lothian, where he is spending his retirement after a career in hunter-chases and point-to-points. The 12-year-old, who was turned out with seven other horses and a pony when the attack took place, was found with a deep four-inch gash on his back which had cut through a muscle.

Jean Arnoux, the gelding's owner, said he is expected to make a full recovery. "Hopefully this is a one-off and I would not want anyone else to witness this," she said. "It is terrible to see and the whole field of horses is distressed. He has not lain down or slept since it happened." Last year, two horses were stabbed at stables near Southampton.

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Victory on Dazzle in the Group One Cheveley Park Stakes at Newmarket in the autumn is the remaining out-

Prior to winning the Robert-Papin, Ocean Ridge had chased home Dazzle in the Cherry Hinton Stakes at Newmarket.



Kieren Fallon steering Dazzle (right) to Royal Ascot victory

Photograph: Sporting Life

Ridge leads Phoenix raiders

Ocean Ridge will lead the British challenge on Sunday's Heinz 57 Phoenix Stakes at Leopardstown. The Peter Chapple-Hyam-trained Prix Robert-Papin winner, together with Mick Channon's Muchea, are the only two attempting to maintain an impressive British record of nine wins from the last 11 runnings of the Group One contest for two-year-olds.

They will be confronted by a strong home team including Coventry Stakes winner Verplus.

standing target of racing's newest centurion Kieren Fallon.

Fallon looked forward to his next date with the 1,000 Guineas favourite having firmly cracked the 100 barrier with a win on Jambo at Nottingham on Wednesday night.

He has steered Dazzle to both her wins to date. "If I could have just one more thing, I would like to see Dazzle win the Cheveley Park Stakes. That would be great," he said yesterday. "I have never sat on anything to compare with her."

BETTING: 6-4 Dazzle, 5-3 Phoenix, 3-2 Desert Orchid, 7-1 Tidalis, 8-1 Muchea, 8-1 others.

WOLVERHAMPTON

HYPERION

2.20 Napier Star 2.50 Ben's Ridge 3.20 Haf's Pal
3.50 China Castle 4.20 Sense Of Priority 4.50
Serious Sensation 5.20 Pearl Anniversary

GOING: Standard.

STALLS: Straight course - stand; sides; rest - inside.

DRAW ADVANTAGE: High from 6 to 14L.

■ Fibremesh, left-hand, oval course.

■ Course is north of town on A440. Wolverhampton station a mile away. Post office Club 515; Tinterns 58 (GAP members of Diamond Club 514); Victoria Restaurant £25.90 including entrance and meal. CAR PARK: Free.

SIS ■ RACING CHANNELS

BLINNED FIRST TIME: Napier Star (scored 2.0), Scored 2.0, Scored 2.0, Scored 2.0, Scored 2.0.

WINNERS IN THE LAST SEVEN DAYS: Bestie Approved (5.30) won at Kempton on Wednesday.

LONG DISTANCE RUNNERS: Dazzling (4.80) sent 170 miles from D' O'Brien's Capet stable in Kent; Miss Hayravon (5.00) sent 158 miles from C' Cyzer's Mapleshurst stable in West Sussex.

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STALLS: Straight course - centre; rest - inside.

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sport

Brothers in arms raise the Pakistan standard

Cricket

DEREK HODGSON
reports from Headingley

Ijaz Ahmed and Salim Malik are married to two sisters in Lahore. Their third-wicket partnership of 130 in 38 overs, after Pakistan had been sent in, could be said to be a stand for family values.

Ijaz, the junior by five years, became the highest scorer for either team on this ground and

achieved a career-best. He pointed out an England error: "I was looking for the ball outside the off stump. I like to play cut shots. The pitch was difficult for two hours, slow in the middle but bouncy wide of the stumps, good for me. I think 350 will be a good score, enough for our bowlers." Salim, once with Essex, reached his best score of the tour.

David Lloyd, England's coach, conceded: "It was Pakistan's day but we are not out

of it. They were apprehensive at the start and we lost patience at times while they were always positive."

On the controversial selection of only four bowlers he added: "We picked the side we thought best capable of bowling them out twice in the prevailing conditions. We now need to get them out as quickly as possible."

The first day may also be remembered in what is beginning to be an England management

and team in flux, for a whisper that John Emburey will shortly replace Peter Lever as the England bowling coach and for a banner that proclaimed "Henry Blofeld is God."

The attendance, 9,000, was so poor that a local colleague claimed that the Yorkshire team would have drawn more. He was also quick to add when Dominic Cork and Chris Lewis were bowling like apprentices before lunch: "We could have had Goughie here to bowl this crap – and we would have had more to watch him."

Test match receipts are still approaching £250,000 and the attendance today and tomorrow will be near capacity but yesterday it was no Darren Gough, no crowd, no Western Terrace brawling – one reason suggested for the stay-away – but very much Pakistan.

Misbehaviour on the open side of the ground, including fighting, drunkenness and much bad language, made the terrace almost a no-go area for families and for many regular cricket watchers, but the Yorkshire club, by limiting the pedestrian area and by increasing the number of stewards, have certainly effected a clampdown but yesterday the atmosphere on what can be a noisy ground was limp.

The mother-in-law in Lahore might be happy to visit England in contrast to Ian Botham, who he said he would not send to Pakistan.



England re-entry stymied by deal

Rugby Union

DAVID LLEWELLYN

They never said it was going to be easy sorting out the mess that was the Five Nations, but it would now appear that the Rugby Football Union is caught between the rock of its legally binding contract and some hard cases in the other four unions.

Tom Kiernan, the chairman of the Five Nations committee, said last night that Twickenham's latest proposals to get back their place in the tournament were unacceptable. Last month England were thrown out after completing their own £87.5m five-year deal with BSkyB.

The other unions want the RFU to make some radical changes to their arrangements with the satellite television broadcaster. Otherwise the four will go ahead with their own championship, to the exclusion of England.

Twickenham came up with some proposals which were considered by the gang of four earlier this week, and it was announced that a letter would be sent to the RFU president, John Richardson, within 48 hours.

Kiernan said: "The proposal made by England was not in keeping with the suggestions made by the four countries at the Cardiff meeting last month. We have therefore responded to the RFU president, John Richardson, indicating precisely where improvements need to be made."

"While our position with regard to England's re-entry into the tournament has not changed, we are still hoping an agreement can be reached prior to us making the necessary commercial and administrative arrangements for the new competition later this month."

Although the 48 hours has elapsed, an RFU spokesperson said no letter has yet been received. "We haven't seen the letter, so we don't know what the improvements are that have been suggested by the other unions. As soon as John Richardson sees the letter and has had time to consider its contents then he will be able to respond."

The stance of the other unions has remained constant throughout, and it appears that England will have to make considerable amendments to their contract with BSkyB before they can satisfy their erstwhile Five Nations colleagues.

Willis leads the Kent revival

Gooch blasts unbeaten 186

Wicketkeeper

MICHAEL AUSTIN
reports from Northampton
Kent 316; Northamptonshire 3-0

dismissed the champions Warwickshire for 306 at Edgbaston.

Omitted by the selectors after his Test debut a fortnight ago, the left-arm paceman achieved the milestone with three wickets in 13 balls before lunch. The Championship newcomer Michael Powell was his 300th victim after making a pleasing first impression in an opening stand of 50 with Andy Mottram.

Durham's habit of picking up maximum bowling points was then maintained by the left-arm spinner David Cox, who went some way towards erasing a bitter Edgbaston memory with a career-best 5 for 97. Two years ago Cox had the misfortune to make his debut during Brian Lara's world-record innings of 501 not out, and his figures of 50 for 163 remain the worst in Durham's first-class history.

Phil Simmons and Ben Smith added 154 in 38 overs between lunch and tea to put Leicestershire in a commanding position on a truncated first day of the Championship match against Warwickshire.

The leaders had reached 298 for 3 off 73 overs when rain prevented any resumption after tea, and an injury to the slow-left-arm spinner Neil Kendrick threatened to disrupt Glamorgan's fragile bowling options.

This became a fulfilling day for Kent, placed joint fifth. They weathered injury problems and a collapse to stretch their seven bowlers, each of them, remarkably, taking a wicket.

Simon Willis, 22, in only his sixth match, turned his status as reserve wicketkeeper to Steve Marsh, the injured captain, into a Championship-best batting performance. He struck 12 fours from 118 balls, having turned a crisis at 145 for 5 into three batting points. Kent's opening stand had been worth 77 runs.

Willis, aged 22, from Greenwich, also deputised for Marsh in the previous match against Worcestershire, scoring 50 for once out and sustained the favourable impression Kent bestowed the captaincy on Trevor Ward for the first time.

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Olympians come to the rescue

Sailing

STUART ALEXANDER
reports from Cowes

Three of Britain's latest Olympic silver medalists were out on the Solent yesterday, trying to lift the profile of Nick Griffiths' and Tim Robinson's 25-foot Australian sportsboat, Big Trousers, the third acting as tactician on a Melges 24.

In addition, one of the most enthusiastic supporters of big boat racing, the London property multi-millionaire Mike Slade, escaped from being knocked overboard when the crew of his 34-foot Longobards pulled off a perfect recovery just 12 minutes before the start of the New York Yacht Club Challenge Cup.

Slade's plunge was almost as impressive. "When the boat switched direction, I was hit on the leg by the sail and must have been knocked 20 feet into the air," he said. "I think I also did a back flip and a somersault before hitting the water."

Slade was denied his second prestige trophy of the week, as they were pipped by less than two minutes on handicap by Glynn Williams' 41-foot Wolf, helmed by the Whitbread skipper Matt Humphries, but he is determined to take the maxi boat prize for the week in the final encounter with Luddi Ingvall's Nicorette today.

Big Trousers had previously been lying 44th in a strongly supported class of 52, but the arrival of John Merricks and Ian Walker, who won silver in the Olympic 470s, made all the difference. She was eighth.

Bon Ainslie, second in the Laser at the Games, sailed with Paul Brotherton yesterday as tactician on Wolf Cub. The race went to Russell Peters, but the week is led by national champion Mike Lennon with David Bedford's Glenfiddich 1 second.

Results, Sporting Digest, page 23

Hill plays down expectations

Motor racing

DERICK ALLSOP
reports from Budapest

The rest of the world have already crowned him and he is aware they have, and by Sunday evening Damon Hill, too, may feel comfortable enough to acknowledge the World Championship is within his grasp.

Hill leads his Williams-Renault team-mate, Jacques Villeneuve, by 21 points, and a win in the Hungarian Grand Prix would open up the possibility of his securing the title at the following race, in Belgium.

It is a thoroughly professional attitude to take and the sport's promoters will doubtless thank him for taking up a good race.

The more serious talking is going on behind the scenes, when driver and team principal, Frank Williams, are vying for positions of strength.

Williams has the best car –

which should be confirmed here with the completion of another

21 points is a healthy lead," he

conceded. "And there's a temptation after Hockenheim to think everything is settled."

But then he went on to remind us five races remained, almost a third of the championship, that the competition was closing, that he did not have the "cosy" luxury of a team-mate willing to back him up.

So, on the circuit where Hill had his maiden victory, three years ago, his 21st beckons. It would be his eighth of this campaign, leaving him one short of the record for a season, shared by Nigel Mansell, Britain's last champion, and Schumacher, the reigning champion.

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Warrington tell Harris to stay at home

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SPORT



Play INDEPENDENT FANTASY FOOTBALL
See page 20 for registration details

SECOND TEST: Pakistani's fluent century overcomes Atherton's long-overdue success with the toss

England deflated by Ijaz injection

DEREK PRINGLE

reports from Headingley
Pakistan 281-6 v England

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Hooked on swing: Pakistan's Ijaz Ahmed hooks the England's Andy Caddick to the boundary during his innings of 141 at Headingley yesterday

Photograph: Peter Jay

with a soft orange and not a Reader ball. The combination of an attacking field and bowling too short to sustain it, though there was early bounce. The predatory Ijaz took 22 off two wayward overs by Chris Lewis, who looked far from match-fit.

This was clearly not how England had envisaged things going 24 hours earlier, when the pitch was still under cover. By putting them in and dispatching Ian Salisbury and Ronnie Irani back to their counties, Michael Atherton at last won it; though not the one that preceded it for choice of ball, which again went Pakistan's way. Asking a side to bat first is a bold move in Test cricket, and is normally backed up by some equally gung-ho tactics on the field.

Defence, therefore, did not come easily to Atherton, whose bowlers, certainly until tea, looked as if they were bowling

Alan Mullally to Atherton in the gully. It was a sharp chance and one the England captain enjoyed taking. But if it gave England ideas that Pakistan were there for the toppling, they were soon dispelled, and it was not until the stroke of lunch that they struck again, when Caddick had Shadab Kahir lbw, tentatively defending, and perhaps too aware of his predicament of having bat through the first session.

The after-lunch prospect of Inzamam-ul-Haq, the hero of Lord's joining Ijaz - now on 58 - was one that any cricket follower would have salivated over, irrespective of creed or country. However, Inzamam looking strangely immobile, became Atherton's second victim in the gully after slicing an airy drive off Mullally.

In truth, the pitch was neither as well grassed or as damp as predicted, and the first three Pakistan wickets to fall were due to unforced errors by the batsmen, with Saeed the first to go as he thrashed a wide ball off

With the score at 103 for 3, England had fortuitously put themselves back into the game. Unfortunately, England's bowlers could not respond. Cork

Headingly scoreboard

England won by	26-6-77-3 (not)
Pakistan - First Innings	
Salim Malik v Atherton & Mullally	1
12 min. 21 boundaries	35
Shadab Kahir v Caddick	35
122 min. 90 boundaries	35
Ijaz Ahmed v Caddick	141
100 min. 100 boundaries	2
Inzamam-ul-Haq v Atherton & Mullally	2
20 min. 10 boundaries	55
Total (not out) 261	55
(253 min. 244 boundaries 3 fours)	55
Aff Mullally not out	15
122 min. 82 boundaries 2 fours	15
Inzamam-ul-Haq v Caddick	7
116 min. 12 boundaries 2 fours	7
Salim Malik not out	15
116 min. 12 boundaries 2 fours	15
Extra 167 runs	13
Total (not out) 261	13
(not out) 261	13
England - Second Innings	261
1st Innings 261	261
2nd Innings 261	261
Progress 80: 71 min. 165 overs. Lunch 98-2 (not out) Ahmed 152 265 overs 100-125 100-2 2nd over 120-2 120-3 120-4 120-5 120-6 120-7 120-8 120-9 120-10 120-11 120-12 120-13 120-14 120-15 120-16 120-17 120-18 120-19 120-20 120-21 120-22 120-23 120-24 120-25 120-26 120-27 120-28 120-29 120-30 120-31 120-32 120-33 120-34 120-35 120-36 120-37 120-38 120-39 120-40 120-41 120-42 120-43 120-44 120-45 120-46 120-47 120-48 120-49 120-50 120-51 120-52 120-53 120-54 120-55 120-56 120-57 120-58 120-59 120-60 120-61 120-62 120-63 120-64 120-65 120-66 120-67 120-68 120-69 120-70 120-71 120-72 120-73 120-74 120-75 120-76 120-77 120-78 120-79 120-80 120-81 120-82 120-83 120-84 120-85 120-86 120-87 120-88 120-89 120-90 120-91 120-92 120-93 120-94 120-95 120-96 120-97 120-98 120-99 120-100 120-101 120-102 120-103 120-104 120-105 120-106 120-107 120-108 120-109 120-110 120-111 120-112 120-113 120-114 120-115 120-116 120-117 120-118 120-119 120-120 120-121 120-122 120-123 120-124 120-125 120-126 120-127 120-128 120-129 120-130 120-131 120-132 120-133 120-134 120-135 120-136 120-137 120-138 120-139 120-140 120-141 120-142 120-143 120-144 120-145 120-146 120-147 120-148 120-149 120-150 120-151 120-152 120-153 120-154 120-155 120-156 120-157 120-158 120-159 120-160 120-161 120-162 120-163 120-164 120-165 120-166 120-167 120-168 120-169 120-170 120-171 120-172 120-173 120-174 120-175 120-176 120-177 120-178 120-179 120-180 120-181 120-182 120-183 120-184 120-185 120-186 120-187 120-188 120-189 120-190 120-191 120-192 120-193 120-194 120-195 120-196 120-197 120-198 120-199 120-200 120-201 120-202 120-203 120-204 120-205 120-206 120-207 120-208 120-209 120-210 120-211 120-212 120-213 120-214 120-215 120-216 120-217 120-218 120-219 120-220 120-221 120-222 120-223 120-224 120-225 120-226 120-227 120-228 120-229 120-230 120-231 120-232 120-233 120-234 120-235 120-236 120-237 120-238 120-239 120-240 120-241 120-242 120-243 120-244 120-245 120-246 120-247 120-248 120-249 120-250 120-251 120-252 120-253 120-254 120-255 120-256 120-257 120-258 120-259 120-260 120-261 120-262 120-263 120-264 120-265 120-266 120-267 120-268 120-269 120-270 120-271 120-272 120-273 120-274 120-275 120-276 120-277 120-278 120-279 120-280 120-281 120-282 120-283 120-284 120-285 120-286 120-287 120-288 120-289 120-290 120-291 120-292 120-293 120-294 120-295 120-296 120-297 120-298 120-299 120-300 120-301 120-302 120-303 120-304 120-305 120-306 120-307 120-308 120-309 120-310 120-311 120-312 120-313 120-314 120-315 120-316 120-317 120-318 120-319 120-320 120-321 120-322 120-323 120-324 120-325 120-326 120-327 120-328 120-329 120-330 120-331 120-332 120-333 120-334 120-335 120-336 120-337 120-338 120-339 120-340 120-341 120-342 120-343 120-344 120-345 120-346 120-347 120-348 120-349 120-350 120-351 120-352 120-353 120-354 120-355 120-356 120-357 120-358 120-359 120-360 120-361 120-362 120-363 120-364 120-365 120-366 120-367 120-368 120-369 120-370 120-371 120-372 120-373 120-374 120-375 120-376 120-377 120-378 120-379 120-380 120-381 120-382 120-383 120-384 120-385 120-386 120-387 120-388 120-389 120-390 120-391 120-392 120-393 120-394 120-395 120-396 120-397 120-398 120-399 120-400 120-401 120-402 120-403 120-404 120-405 120-406 120-407 120-408 120-409 120-410 120-411 120-412 120-413 120-414 120-415 120-416 120-417 120-418 120-419 120-420 120-421 120-422 120-423 120-424 120-425 120-426 120-427 120-428 120-429 120-430 120-431 120-432 120-433 120-434 120-435 120-436 120-437 120-438 120-439 120-440 120-441 120-442 120-443 120-444 120-445 120-446 120-447 120-448 120-449 120-450 120-451 120-452 120-453 120-454 120-455 120-456 120-457 120-458 120-459 120-460 120-461 120-462 120-463 120-464 120-465 120-466 120-467 120-468 120-469 120-470 120-471 120-472 120-473 120-474 120-475 120-476 120-477 120-478 120-479 120-480 120-481 120-482 120-483 120-484 120-485 120-486 120-487 120-488 120-489 120-490 120-491 120-492 120-493 120-	